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**Family and consumer sciences teachers' attitudes and practices
concerning parent involvement in the educational process**

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Iowa State University, 1994

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**300 N. Zeeb Rd.
Ann Arbor, MI 48106**

**Family and consumer sciences teachers' attitudes and
practices concerning parent involvement in the educational process**

by

Tersie Udeme Ndon

**A Dissertation Submitted to the
Graduate Faculty in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirement for the Degree of
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY**

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Ames, Iowa**

1994

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DEDICATION

**Dedicated to my husband, Udeme J. Ndon, our children, Ediommo, Sifon,
and Idara, and my parents, Mr. and Mrs. Archibong A. Nsaka.**

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CHAPTER I. INTRODUCTION

Strong connections between home and school enhance academic success and school performance of children. The strength of the school-home interface is particularly important for adolescents as they make the transition from lower grades to middle and high school where they face new and greater expectations from teachers and peers. This transition can lead to poor academic performance in school, even for the more academically able students (Berk, 1989). A strong school-home interface can ease the transition and provide a sense of continuity and security for these students so they may perform well in school.

Preparing and equipping teachers with strong skills in school-home collaboration is also an important first step toward meeting the national education goals presented in Public Law 103-227, "Goals 2000: Educate America Act" signed by President Clinton on March 31, 1994. By the year 2000, every school will promote partnerships that will increase parental involvement and participation in promoting the social, emotional, and academic growth of children. The objectives for this goal are that:

- 1. every state will develop policies to assist local schools and local educational agencies to establish programs for increasing partnerships that respond to the varying needs of parents and the home, including parents of children who are disadvantaged, or bilingual, or parents of children with disabilities.**
-

2. every school will actively engage parents and families in a partnership which supports the academic work of children at home and shared educational decision-making at school.
3. parents and families will help to ensure that schools are adequately supported and will hold schools and teachers to high standards of accountability (p. 108 STAT.133).

The importance of overlapping influence of families and professional educators on adolescent students' learning and development in school is supported by a growing number of studies. Higher academic achievement (Becher, 1984; Haynes, Comer, & Hamilton-Lee, 1989), readiness to do homework, better school attendance, and higher educational aspirations (Rich, 1988) are documented outcomes of higher levels of parental involvement.

There are also positive outcomes for parents and teachers. As Epstein and Dauber (1991) found in their research, when teachers make parent involvement part of their teaching practices, parents feel more positive about their ability to help their children at home and rate the teachers and schools as more effective.

Despite the positive link documented between parent involvement and children's academic achievement, other research evidence shows that many teachers do not involve parents in the education of their children in significant ways (Epstein, 1987b). This has, in turn, prompted further research to study potential barriers to parent involvement.

Epstein and Dauber's 1989 study strongly suggested that teachers' attitudes toward parent involvement may be one of the key barriers to strong partnerships with parents. Greenwood and Hickman (1991) found that almost half of the 200 elementary school teachers they surveyed indicated little or no benefit from parent involvement, believing that the problems involved in planning and implementing parent involvement activities outweighed the benefits. Williams and Stallworth (1983, 1984) found that teachers who saw little benefit in parent involvement favored only traditional parent-involvement activities such as contributing bake sale items or attending class plays, and did not see active forms of parent involvement such as taking part in school decision-making and helping parents plan home-learning activities for their children as useful or appropriate. Davies (1988) found that many teachers who did not involve parents made stereotypical assumptions that low-income, minority, and single-parent families were deficient in their ability and desire to be involved.

Another teacher characteristic that has been associated with different levels of involvement is teachers' sense of efficacy or self-confidence in their own teaching effectiveness. Results of a study by Hoover-Dempsey, Bassler, and Brissie (1987) strongly suggested that teachers who believed they were effective and capable teachers were more likely to seek contacts with parents and to see parents' offers of help as a complement to their teaching. All the

findings (Hoover-Dempsey, Bassler & Brissie, 1987; Greenwood & Hickman, 1991; Epstein & Dauber, 1991) suggest that the attitudes of teachers and their sense of teaching efficacy can be important variables in establishing close partnerships with parents for children's education. However, most of the studies have focused on elementary school teachers rather than the critical junior and high school levels. Further, no study was found that was conducted with family and consumer sciences teachers who by the nature of their profession and training have particular expertise in working with families.

As a profession, family and consumer sciences serve a unique role in constructing links between households, families, and other systems of society (Duncan, 1990). Family and consumer sciences education professionals have the knowledge and skills to communicate with families to build stronger links between schools and parents, making children's education a joint venture between the two systems. Lightfoot (1978) observed that an understanding of families is an important first step in an effort to establish a strong home and school relationship.

In light of Lightfoot's observation and the nature of the family and consumer scientists' role, then, it becomes clear that the family and consumer sciences education profession, composed of those who teach at all levels in the field, has a significant role to play in bringing families and schools together in the process of educating children. No other profession studies and under-

stands families as does the family and consumer sciences profession. B. Crabtree (Classroom lecture supplement, August 1, 1991) stated that although other disciplines and professions study the family, only the family and consumer sciences profession approaches the study of the family with an integrative, holistic, and synergistic focus. This unique focus of the profession equips family and consumer sciences professionals with the unique skills and competencies to understand and work effectively with families. By drawing knowledge from specific family and consumer sciences subject matter areas and other related disciplines, family and consumer sciences educators are well positioned to seek solutions to problems that affect families in order to empower them to capitalize on their own strengths.

By the same token, the family and consumer sciences profession also prepares professionals that can help empower parents and families to be more involved in all aspects of their children's education by helping them, through parenting education programs, to find ways to solve family problems that may interfere with their ability to be involved. As Kurtz and Barth (1989) noted, alleviation of family problems is a significant prerequisite to parent involvement in their children's education.

In light of these facts, it becomes clear that studies that focus on junior and high school family and consumer sciences teachers' attitudes about school-home collaborations are needed. Studies of this nature will provide data

for family and consumer sciences teacher educators so they can better prepare pre-service and in-service family and consumer sciences teachers to positively capitalize on their unique professional focus on the family to enhance children's educational achievement. This study, therefore, is designed to assess Iowa junior and senior high school family and consumer sciences teachers concerning their involvement of parents in the educational process of children. Specific objectives are to:

1. assess attitudes toward parent involvement;
2. describe parent involvement practices;
3. assess the sense of personal teaching efficacy;
4. assess the level of support they believe others in their schools and communities hold for parent involvement;
5. determine relationships among selected demographic variables, attitudes, sense of teaching efficacy, beliefs about the level of support and practices;
6. determine whether or not their attitudes, practices, sense of teaching efficacy and perceived level of support held by others differ by educational level, level of in-service education about parent involvement, grade level taught, and teaching of other subject area(s) in addition to family and consumer sciences; and

7. based on the results related to the previous six objectives, make recommendations for improvements in family and consumer sciences teacher education programs.

Limitations

1. The study was limited to family and consumer sciences teachers in the state of Iowa.
2. The study sample were all caucasians, mostly women, and older with 11 to 30 years of teaching experience. The results may not be applicable to minorities, men, and younger groups of family and consumer sciences teachers.
3. Data for this study were collected through self-report questionnaire, whose validity depends on the subjects' willingness to give honest answers to the questions.

CHAPTER II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Studies consistently show that when teachers and parents work together and support each other's efforts, children of all ages and grade levels have more positive attitudes about school and perform better academically. It would seem that educators would therefore welcome the opportunity to involve parents in their children's education. Yet, in spite of all the research findings that have confirmed the benefits of parent involvement in children's education, many educators continue to show lack of acceptance of the notion of school-parent partnerships (McAfee, 1987).

Because the purpose of the present study is to assess junior and high school family and consumer sciences teachers concerning their involvement of parents in the educational process, several categories of literature pertinent to this purpose were reviewed and are summarized in this chapter. In order of presentation, they are:

1. The school and parent connection.
2. Theoretical perspectives about the school and parent connection.
3. Definitions of parent involvement.
4. Types of parent involvement.
5. Advantages of parent involvement.
 - a. advantages to lower grade students.
 - b. advantages to junior and high school students.

- c. advantages to parents.
- d. advantages to teachers.
- 6. Disadvantages of parent involvement.
- 7. Factors influencing parent-involvement practices of teachers.
- 8. Factors influencing involvement practices of parents.

The School and Parent Connection

The importance of maintaining a link between school and parents for children's learning and development is not a new revelation. This concept was discussed in the literature as far back as the early 1900s. However, as Lightfoot (1978) pointed out, in these earlier times educational institutions often viewed parent involvement in school activities as an infringement on their professional territory. Similarly, most parents believed that it was in their children's best interests to leave their education to professionals who were trained to educate children at school.

However, a renewed interest in, and support for, the school and parent connection has developed since the late 1960s on the part of parents, educators, and the general public. Swap (1990) observed that this interest is due in part to the realization that continuity in values between home and school can reduce conflict for children, reinforce learning, and ease the transitions between the two environments. Bronfenbrenner (1979) added that relationships

between schools and parents must be improved if children's education is to be optimized.

Wlodkowski and Jaynes (1990) argued that a "positive relationship between school and parents in and of itself is of greater value than the sum of simply adding good home influences to good school influences" (p. 55). They said that the interaction of influences from parents and teachers can provide an important and powerful factor in creating an atmosphere that supports learning. For example, although a teacher may clearly explain homework assignments, it is important for parents to enforce expectations for the homework completion. When parents and teachers combine their efforts to make the reasons for homework assignments clear to students, the cooperative effort can greatly influence and motivate students to learn. Wlodkowski and Jaynes stated further that this influence is powerful because of the integration of parents' and teachers' efforts and the consistent message that is communicated to students.

Based on her research findings, Swap (1990) concluded that when students experience inconsistencies in expectations between parents and school, their abilities to perform well in school can be impaired. She called for parents and educators to work together to create an atmosphere that fostered optimal student learning. She added that if the conditions of our educational institu-

tions are to be improved, schools must use the advice, strengths, and resources that parents can offer.

Lightfoot (1978) further articulated the importance of a positive school and parent relationship:

If one recognizes the initial social and cultural task assumed by all families, and their primary educative function, then it becomes clear that in order for schools to be productive and comfortable environments for children, they will have to meaningfully incorporate the familial and cultural skills and values learned in homes and communities. . . . When schools and families support dissonant values and goals, and when families and communities are perceived as inadequate and chaotic environments by arrogant and threatened school personnel, then education within families is devalued and systematically excluded from the school culture. Children experience the cultural dissonance between home and school, recognize the sharp contrast and the forced choice they must make for successful accommodation in both worlds, and develop more or less functional strategies for relieving the environmental tensions. (pp. 170-171)

Lombana (1983) summarized the general purpose of positive school-parent partnerships as that of fostering the education of children and youth through joint efforts of the two most influential social institutions. In addition, she said that a strong school and parent partnership can result in greater attainment of the goals of education, a lessening of discipline problems, more effectiveness in individualized learning experiences for children, greater assistance for the classroom teacher, and help in child-raising strategies for parents.

Theoretical Perspectives about the School and Parent Connection

Recent advances in the study of school and parent connections have resulted in the development of three theoretical perspectives. They are: 1) separate responsibilities of parents and school, 2) sequential responsibilities of parents and school, and 3) shared responsibilities of parents and school. These three perspectives, according to Epstein (1987), currently guide researchers and practitioners in thinking, practice, and research designs about school and parent connections. Each perspective leads to differing views and philosophies regarding the appropriate responsibilities of parents and schools in the education of children. Each also leads to differing practices for school and parent partnerships.

Separate responsibilities of parents and school

Assumptions based on the theoretical perspective of separate responsibilities of parents and school stress the inherent incompatibility, competition, and conflict between families and schools. The perspective assumes that school bureaucracies and family organizations are directed, respectively, by educators and parents whose different goals, roles, and responsibilities are best fulfilled independently. Furthermore, it assumes that the distinct goals of the family and school can be achieved most efficiently and effectively when teachers maintain their professional and objective standards and judgments

about the children in their classrooms and when parents maintain their personal attention and subjective standards and judgments about their children at home. By maintaining objective standards in the classroom, teachers are seen to be better able to give equal amounts of attention, judge every student by the same standards, and use explicit and public criteria for making those judgments to ensure fairness to all students. On the other hand, by using subjective standards, parents are able to give individual attention to each child within the supportive family context and to treat each child as a special person (Parsons, 1959; Waller, 1932; Weber, 1947; Epstein, 1987; Kagan, Powell, Weissbourd, & Zigler, 1987).

Sequential responsibilities of parents and schools

The perspective of sequential responsibilities of parents and schools emphasized critical stages of parents' and teachers' contributions to children at different times during their development. According to Bloom (1964), Kagan (1980), Freud (1937), and Piaget and Inhelder (1969), this theoretical perspective is based on the belief that the early years of a child's life are critical for later success and that by ages five or six, when the child enters formal schooling, the child's personality and attitudes toward learning are well established. Parents are believed to have the primary responsibility for the first critical stage of their children's learning. They need to teach their children learning skills and values by arranging and exposing them to educational programs and experienc-

es that prepare their children for school. Pictorially, Epstein (1990) presented this theoretical perspective as a ladder or time line of influences on children's education and socialization, with the parents, school, and individual child as three successive and sequential steps to educational progress.

Shared responsibilities of parents and schools

In contrast to the first two theoretical perspectives, Bronfenbrenner (1979), Leichter (1974), and Litwak and Meyer (1974) proposed a third theoretical perspective of shared responsibilities of parents and schools. This theoretical perspective is based on the assumption of continuous shared responsibilities of parents and schools throughout a child's school experiences. As such, parents and teachers are urged to cooperate, coordinate educational experiences for children, and complement each other's efforts. Communication and collaboration between the two institutions is encouraged. Those preferring this perspective believe that parents and schools have shared responsibilities for the socialization and education of children throughout their school experiences. Further, they believe that parents and teachers likely share common goals for children that are achieved most effectively when teachers and parents work together. As Litwak and Meyer (1974) pointed out, the assumptions made by this theoretical perspective are based on models of inter-institutional interactions and ecological designs that emphasize the natural, nested, and necessary connections between individuals and their groups and organizations.

Bronfenbrenner (1979) extended the connections between institutions even further in his ecological approach. He asserted that the inter-setting or "mesosystem"—the relationship between two or more systems in which family members function—is important for the individual. As such, he called for research on the effects of these connections. Bronfenbrenner hypothesized that personal development will be enhanced when exchanges between the settings are bi-directional, sustain and enhance mutual trust and goal consensus, and exhibit a balance of power. Bronfenbrenner considered these as characteristics of true partnerships.

In the theoretical perspective of shared responsibilities of parents and schools, clearly the one preferred by Epstein in her writings (1990), the two institutions that educate and socialize children are presented by her pictorially as two spheres that overlap in their goals, resources, and practices. Within the external structure of the overlapping spheres, the model recognizes an internal structure of interactions between and among the various members of school and family organizations in order to influence student learning and development. In addition, three major forces affect the content and extent of the overlap between families and schools: 1) time as it accounts for changes in the ages and grade levels of students and the influence of current societal condition, 2) philosophies, policies, and practices of the family, and 3) philosophies, policies, and practices of the school. These forces, according to

Epstein, determine how much and what kinds of overlap can occur at any given time, and the nature of interactions that are likely to occur between parents and schools.

Teaching practices of teachers reflect their preferences among the three theoretical perspectives about parent and school connections. Teachers who prefer the two theoretical perspectives that stress separate or sequential responsibilities of parents and schools emphasize the specialization of skills required by teachers for teaching children at school and by parents for teaching children at home. These teachers restrict their efforts to teaching the "basics" academic skills needed by students. This creates a condition Epstein (1987a) called "false specialization and division of labor" (p. 132) that pulls the spheres of school and family influences and responsibilities apart, decreases the overlap, and restricts interactions between parents and teachers.

In contrast, teachers who prefer the perspective of shared responsibilities of parents and schools understand the importance of strong relationships between the two institutions that educate and socialize children. These teachers believe that by working closely with parents they can be more effective in producing educated and successful students. Believing this, they teach the "whole child," stress all facets of development including social, emotional, physical, and academic, and increase their attention to the child's home life. This effort to increase the overlapping spheres of influence between

home and school creates what Epstein called "school-like families" and "family-like schools" (p. 130).

Definition of Parent Involvement

The third theory presented in the preceding section, that of overlapping spheres of influence of parents and schools on students' learning and development, has resulted in a renewed emphasis on parent involvement in children's education. Although the topic has been studied extensively over the years, no standard definition has yet emerged. Rather, attempts to systematically study parent involvement practices have resulted in the concept being used broadly to refer to different types of activities. For example, some of the parent-involvement studies reviewed in the literature focused on the partnerships between parents and schools and children's academic achievement. Examples were: Epstein (1990), Kroth (1989), Vartuli and Winter (1989), and Greenwood and Hickman (1991). Other studies focused on programs aimed at teaching parents effective parenting and child-rearing skills. Gamson, Hornstein, and Borden (1989) and Nye (1989) were a few examples of such studies. The review of literature revealed, however, that most researchers in this field prefer to operationally define parent involvement by its types and forms. Examples included Greenwood, Olejnik, and Zemlo (1982) and Rhine (1981). However, Swick and Duff (1978) and Morrison (1978) argued that although it is worthwhile to recognize a broad variety of definitions, a compre-

hensive definition that integrates all aspects of parent involvement in children's education is needed.

Morrison further argued that what is needed is a concept of parent involvement that is comprehensive and conceives of parents as individuals with talents and skills to be used for their own welfare as well as the welfare of their children and their children's schools. The definition, according to Morrison, should also recognize that parents have mental, physical, emotional, and social needs that can be met through parent involvement when conceptualized appropriately. A lesser concept of parent involvement, according to Morrison, would be demeaning both to parents and to those who seek their involvement. Consequently, Morrison defined parent involvement as a "process of actualizing the potential of parents; of helping parents discover their strengths, potentialities, and talents; and of using them for the benefit of themselves, their children, their families as a whole, and the school" (p. 22).

Similarly, Swick and Duff (1978) offered what they saw as a meaningful definition of parent involvement, a "parent-teacher relationship that is reflective of a partnership approach to making the home-school setting productive in terms of the growth and development of the child" (p. 3). This definition portrays teachers and parents as co-educators working together to facilitate the two learning environments so that children can learn and emerge as useful human beings. Also implied in this definition is the need for continuous

learning, growth, and exploration by teachers and parents so they can better themselves and improve their ability to create good and supportive learning environments for children.

Further, Swick and Duff pointed out that when teachers and parents agree to work together and learn from each other, they are in essence building a partnership approach to designing, implementing, and evaluating the quality of the home and school settings. They maintained that a true partnership between teachers and parents should include the following:

1. Parents and teachers working toward common goals in a mutually supportive manner.
2. Teachers involving parents in all facets of the school program including the decision-making areas such as curriculum development and classroom management procedures.
3. Parents relating to teachers their concerns and the modes of living their children enact in the home environment.
4. Parents and teachers communicating with each other about common concerns and problems in an open and honest fashion.
5. Parents and teachers continually educating themselves so they can function as knowledgeable partners.

6. Parents and teachers who are supportive of each other, sensitive to their unique needs and compassionate in their interpersonal relationships.
7. Teachers who like to have parents involved in the classroom and parents who feel good about teacher participation in the education of their children.
8. Teachers designing a variety of opportunities to involve as many parents as possible in the school program.
9. Parents actively planning their work and leisure schedules in ways that can allow them to be involved in the educational facet of their children's lives. (pp. 3-4)

Focusing mainly on the role of parent involvement in children's academic achievement, Fehrmann, Keith, and Reimers (1987) defined parent involvement as "actual or perceived expectations for performance, verbal encouragement or interactions regarding homework, direct reinforcement for academic improvement and general academic guidance or support" (p. 330). This definition is more narrow than those of Morrison and Swick and Duff in that it considered only parents' interactions with their children at home. It failed to consider parents' interactions with the schools and teachers and how those interactions may help the children in their academic performances.

Davies (1993) also called for a new and broader definition of parent involvement. He argued against using the term "parent" alone. He believed that the term does not accurately portray the reality of today's family structures. Instead, Davies argued strongly for using the term "parent/family" jointly. He believed that this is more encompassing and applicable to today's families. He pointed out that for many children the most significant adults in their lives may be aunts, uncles, brothers and sisters, and even unrelated neighbors who provide child care. The new definition, according to Davies, is ecological in perspective in that it goes beyond parents to include all community agencies and institutions of which the child is a part. Duncan (1992) supported Davies' argument by saying that using parent/family is necessary and more compatible with the changes that have occurred in the family structure over the years. These changes, according to Duncan, carry with them new styles of family living that have significant impacts on students, parents, and their relationships with the school.

Types of Parent Involvement

Rhine (1981) and Epstein's (1987b) innovative research in this area have established five general types of involvement which schools can use to involve parents in the educational process of young children and adolescents. These are: 1) basic obligations of parents, 2) basic obligations of schools, 3) parent involvement at school, 4) parent involvement in learning activities at home, and

5) parent involvement in governance and advocacy. According to these researchers, the five types have aspects that overlap, but are still conceptually separable.

Basic obligations of parents

In basic obligations of parents, Epstein and Dauber (1991) included provision for children's health and safety, and development of parenting skills and child-rearing approaches that prepare children for school. This type of involvement oblige parents to build good home conditions that support positive behavior toward school and learning across all the child's school years. Most parents are able to meet these needs for their children independently, but when the needs are not met, schools can assist the parents. Specifically, teachers can work alone or collaborate with other school personnel to assist parents to develop the knowledge and parenting skills needed to help their children succeed at each grade level. This can be accomplished through workshops at the school or in other locations, home visits, family support programs, and other forms of parenting education programs.

Basic obligations of schools

The more traditional way schools involve parents is by communications to them about school programs and children's progress. Some often-used communication strategies include conferences, report cards, notices, and open

house programs, as well as more innovative strategies that may be developed by each school. Although basic obligations of schools include mostly communication from school to home, Swap (1990) also saw the need for teachers to ask for and receive information from the students' homes. She added that parents should be encouraged to share information that might help teachers understand the children's learning styles, special strengths, or crises that might impede responsiveness at school. Based on research findings, Dornbusch and Ritter (1988) concluded that information from parents to teachers is especially important at the high school level.

Because communication from school to home is often used by schools as the main way to involve parents, it has been given the most emphasis in teacher education programs. Parent-teacher conferencing and communication skills are taught as topics in a variety of college and university courses that prepare teachers. Also, books such as one by Swap (1987) titled Enhancing Parent Involvement at Schools are written on how to conduct conferences and collect information from parents. However, Greenwood and Hickman (1991) warned that educators should stop viewing such activities as the only means to involve parents, but rather as a first step in moving on to other types of parent involvement.

Parent involvement at school

Parent involvement at school requires parents to be physically present at school. Parents come to school and devote their time free of charge to assist teachers, administrators, and children in classrooms or in other areas of the schools. At times, parents come to school to give moral support to their children during school events such as dramatic performances, sports, or other school events.

In some instances parents are employed as paraprofessionals paid to work as aides in the classrooms. A specified number of hours of training and volunteer work is often included in the criteria for employing parents as paraprofessionals (Chavkin & Williams, 1987).

In order for parent involvement in school activities to succeed, schools need to establish schedules that will allow more parents to participate as volunteers and as audiences. Also, the classroom teachers need to examine what kinds of meaningful contributions parents can make in the classroom. Involving parents only in low-level activities such as housekeeping tasks or updating bulletin boards may be a waste of talent and not the best approach to positively impacting students' learning (Greenwood & Hickman, 1991). On the other hand, if teachers assess the parents' interests and strengths and determine meaningful roles for them to play, parents can make the classroom effective and stimulating as well as serve as role models for the students.

Lightfoot (1978) presented the following observations regarding the importance of parents' presence in the school:

It is important to recognize that the presence of parents in the classroom not only provides more adults to teach reading or offer help and support to children. The parents' presence also transforms the culture of the school, and the transmission of the lessons takes on a different quality and character. For example, if the concepts presented are unfamiliar and alien to the child's experience, the parents' presence, their styles of interactions, and their facial expressions help put the new concepts in a familiar environment for the child by making the classroom feel more like home. (p. 173)

Parent involvement at school is often seen exclusively as a mother's responsibility, regardless of whether or not she works outside the home. Through an in-depth interview with 450 mothers and fathers of elementary school children, Lareau (1989) found that 95 percent of the fathers agreed that it was more appropriate for mothers to alter their work schedules to allow them to volunteer in programs at school or to attend their children's sport events at school. In a separate interview with 98 elementary school male and female teachers, Lareau found that they, too, had a gender bias in their assessment of parent involvement at school. These teachers said that they admired fathers who volunteered at schools, but that they expected mothers to do it routinely.

The gender bias in the attitudes held by fathers and teachers toward parent involvement at school seems to suggest that men's time is more valuable than that of women. These attitudes were vividly revealed in one father's statement:

I never thought of it, but if it was something I wanted to do, like skiing, I would find the time. It never crossed my mind. I guess I thought that it was women's work. It was not manly . . . was that too much of a male chauvinist thing to say? I would rather do the soccer than sit around with little kids cutting out paper. (p. 89)

Parent involvement in learning activities at home

Parent involvement in learning activities at home is used as a means of assisting parents to understand and to exercise their role as co-educators of their children. Parental assistance with learning activities at home may occur with or without specific advice and direction from teachers at school. Epstein (1989), and Twillie, Petry, Kenney, and Payne (1991) found that when teachers specifically requested parental assistance in their children's learning activities at home, the learning activities were usually designed to build either general skills and behaviors or specific learning skills that were directly coordinated with the children's school work. In addition, parents were asked to assist their children in developing and building other skills that were useful in school success, such as helping children learn how to manage study habits, develop problem solving, critical thinking skills, and other school routines.

Epstein (1987) identified 16 techniques that can be used by teachers to involve parents in learning activities with their children at home. They were:

1. asking parents to read to their children regularly or to listen to the children read aloud

2. loaning books, workbooks, and other materials to parents
 3. asking parents to take their children to the library
 4. asking parents to get their children to talk about what they do each day in the classroom
 5. giving an assignment that requires the children to ask their parents questions
 6. asking parents to watch a specific television program with their children and to discuss the program afterward
 7. suggesting ways for parents to include their children in any of their own educationally enriching activities
 8. sending home suggestions for games or group activities related to the children's schoolwork that can be played by either parent and child or by child and siblings
 9. suggesting how parents might use home materials and activities to stimulate their children's interest in subjects learned at school
 10. establishing a formal agreement whereby parents provide rewards and/or penalties based on the children's school performance or behavior
 11. establishing a formal agreement whereby parents supervise and assist children in completing homework tasks
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12. asking parents to come to observe the classroom for part of a day
13. explaining to parents certain techniques for teaching, for making learning materials, or for planning lessons
14. giving a questionnaire to parents so that they can evaluate their children's progress or provide some other form of feedback
15. asking parents to sign homework to ensure its completion
16. asking parents to provide spelling practice, math drills, and practice activities, or to help with workbook assignments.

(p. 28)

Parent involvement in governance and advocacy

Parent involvement in governance and advocacy gives parents the opportunity to participate in parent-teacher associations or organizations, advisory councils, and school committees at the local and state levels. Epstein (1991) stated that schools can empower parents in these roles by training parent leaders and representatives in decision-making skills and in ways to communicate with parents they represent.

Regarding the influence of parent involvement in governance and advocacy on children's academic performance, Swap (1990) noted that parent involvement in decision making, whether in policy or curriculum, was not

particularly related to student achievement. Two explanations discussed were that parent advisory councils tend to be dominated by principals who set the agendas and decide what should be done to implement council recommendations so that their power structure remains unthreatened, and that most schools use parent involvement in school decision-making as a cover to subdue public fears about the quality of their children's education rather than as a means of improving the schools.

Collaboration and exchanges with community organizations

In addition to the five types of parent involvement that were originally identified by Rhine (1981) and Epstein (1987), collaboration and exchanges with community organizations have been suggested by the California State Board of Education (1988) as the sixth important component in a school's comprehensive programs for involving parents in their children's education. Collaboration and exchanges with community organizations allow educators to work with agencies, businesses, and other groups in the community that impact children's education and future success. Through these collaborations, educators help parents to gain access to services such as after-school care, health care services, and organizations that coordinate resources to support children's learning (Epstein, 1991).

Heath and McLaughlin (1987) believed that collaboration between schools and community agencies is important since parents are likely to

participate in their children's education in different ways. They urged schools to see the child as a member of a broader social network of community institutions, volunteer agencies, and businesses, in the larger environment. They believed that when parents have access to community services that support children's learning, children from all socioeconomic backgrounds can acquire cultural capital. Bourdieu (1977a) defined cultural capital as the process through which individuals realize advantages from their socialization with others.

Heath and McLaughlin (1987) further urged society to think of the school as a link to other institutions within the society. Swap (1990) added that when schools are conceived in this way, they move from the role of "deliverer" of educational services to "broker" of multiple services that can be used to help children and families in the educational process. According to Swap, schools can be brokers of services in two ways. First, they can promote a closer link between families and the community, and second, they can promote a closer link between schools and other communities. Jackson and Cooper (1989) provided examples of school-family-community links that not only helped parents to help their children, but also to help themselves, such as completing GED (high school equivalency) classes, English-as-a-second-language classes, or group trips to cultural activities. In addition, when schools reach out to the community, the process can create an opportunity for them to

acquire important resources that can be helpful in a time of budget crisis and personnel reduction (Davies, Cooper, & Page, 1988).

The family-school-community model of parent involvement recognizes the importance of a child's connections to the multiple institutions in the environment for appropriate growth and development. This model fits more appropriately with Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecological view of human development. In his book, The Ecology of Human Development, Bronfenbrenner conceptualized the family environment as being comprised of exosystems and mesosystems. Exosystems are settings in which family members do not participate directly, but which nevertheless establish some of the conditions of family life. Examples are political, economic, and environmental systems of the society in which the family lives. Mesosystems, on the other hand, are relationships between two or more systems in which family members do directly participate, such as those between home and school or home and workplace. Based on their research findings, Bronfenbrenner and Munsen (1983) concluded that family members' participation in a variety of settings outside the home can have positive effects on family functioning and children's development as long as the goals are compatible across settings. Davies (1993) stated that the interest of a child is better served when there are good connections in all parts of the ecosystem.

The importance of using school as a link to other institutions in society was further supported by Kagan (1989):

As schools embrace a more comprehensive vision of the society, the schoolhouse doors swing open ever wider. To meet the comprehensive needs of children, contacts with agencies rendering health, welfare, and social services have become routine. Special education legislation has propelled interagency collaboration to a new level, and the need to meet the before- and after-school child care needs of children has fostered many connections between schools and communities. Collaborations between university scholars and school personnel have also helped mend town-gown schisms. And the existence of 40,000 partnerships between businesses and schools clearly indicates that the conventional vision of schools as isolated entities is outdated. (p. 110)

Advantages of Parent Involvement

Advantages to elementary school children

Parent involvement in education is linked to many positive outcomes for children. These positive outcomes include higher academic achievement (Haynes, Comer, & Hamilton-Lee, 1989; Chavkin, 1993; Lombana, 1983; Jones, 1991; Walberg, Bole, & Waxman, 1980), increased students' school attendance, decrease in dropout rate, positive parent-child communication, improved students' attitudes and behavior, higher level of self-esteem, and readiness to complete homework assignments on time (Rich, 1985; Henderson, 1988; Rich, 1988).

Of all those advantages, students' higher academic achievement has received the most attention. Walberg, Bole, and Waxman found that students' achievement seemed to increase when parents show support to their children's school work at home. They discovered that when parents of elementary students participated intensely in a program designed to create conditions of academic support in the home, the students scored 0.5 to 0.6 grade equivalents higher on the Iowa Test of Basic Skills than did students who were less intensely exposed. Conditions of academic support included a contract with the child for home study, parent agreement to provide a study space for the child, daily discussion about school, parental enthusiasm about the child's achievements, and the parents' willingness to cooperate with the teacher.

Although studies have shown that all children benefit when parents are involved in education, minority children and children from low-income homes tend to gain more academically when their parents are involved in their education (Snow, Barnes, Chandler, Goodman, & Hemphill, 1991; Henderson, 1987; Tangri & Moles, 1987). Parent involvement seems to work for these children by allowing their parents to have a variety of interactions with them. Walberg (1984) called these interactions the "curriculum of the home" and includes leisure reading and family conversations about everyday events. Clark (1983) called these interactions "linguistic capital," defined as parental instruction and guidance in language skills during everyday home activities. Coleman (1987)

preferred the term "social capital" which is the personal interest and intense involvement of parents with their children's development.

Walberg (1984) offered further evidence in support of parent involvement and academic achievement for minority children and children from low-income homes. Through his review of 29 controlled studies on school-home programs, he found that family participation in education was twice as predictive of academic achievement as family socioeconomic status. In addition, he found that some parent-involvement programs had effects ten times as large as socioeconomic status and benefitted both older and younger students. Henderson (1987) added that when parents show an interest in their children's education and have high expectations for their performance, they are promoting attitudes that are important for achievement. These attitudes, according to Henderson, are formed independently of social class or other external circumstances.

Prompted by the tremendous evidence linking parent involvement to children's academic achievement, researchers began to ask what specific parenting behaviors were likely to increase children's academic achievement. Baker and Stevenson (1986), Milne, Mayers, Rosenthal, and Ginsburg (1986), Ames and Archer (1987), and Stevenson and Baker (1987), have identified two. They were cognitive and academic socialization.

Cognitive socialization

Cognitive socialization is how parents contribute to the basic intellectual development of children. Toby's (1957) early work in this area provided evidence that associated children's general level of achievement with factors such as the degree to which parents provide tutoring when needed. Currently, researchers are focusing on the types of parent-child (usually mother-child) interactions that seem to promote or retard cognitive development. Some of these studies are grounded in the theoretical writings of Vygotsky and Piaget, whose underlying assumption was that parents function in much the same way as teachers do in this area. However, it appears that parents do not necessarily have to teach their children explicitly, nor does the teaching have to involve specific techniques or strategies. Rather, as Bempechat (1990) pointed out, parents teach their children in subtle and indirect ways as they go through their daily lives and routines.

A study by Hess and Shipman (1965) revealed that children's academic achievement was enhanced when parents promoted an active approach to learning. McDevitt and Hess (1985) found that parents who used less direct control techniques tended to have children with higher than average cognitive ability. Sigel (1982) concluded that parental distancing strategies played a significant role in children's cognitive development, distancing being defined as the psychological separation of an individual from the immediate present, a

phenomenon that appears to be critical in the development of representational thinking and general cognitive skills. In a similar vein, Rogoff and Gardner (1984) said that an important aspect of parent-child interaction is the way parents bring together the contexts of unfamiliar problems and more familiar ones. According to Rogoff and Gardner, parents or other adults organize the occurrence of cognitive tasks for children, for example, making a puzzle and facilitate learning by monitoring difficulty level, offering helpful suggestions where appropriate, and modeling mature performance. In doing this, parents help children create a context in which new information becomes compatible with their current level of knowledge and skills.

Rogoff and Gardner added that parents may not necessarily have explicit instructional goals, but nevertheless can, and often do structure their interactions with their children in ways that promote cognitive development. In the learning process, information and skills are transmitted through routine parent-child communication and implicit instruction that consists of highly supportive scaffolding, where parents give explanations, hints, and demonstrations until the child masters the skill. In a successful conclusion, responsibility for performing the skill is transferred from parent to child, but parents differ in how well they can use this type of behavior with their children.

Academic socialization

Another parenting behavior Ames and Archer (1987) used to explain children's academic achievement was academic socialization. Through this process, parents influence their children's development of attitudes and beliefs about themselves that are helpful for dealing with instruction in school. Ames and Archer's study showed that parents' attitudes, expectations, and beliefs about school and learning guided their behavior with their children. With regard to parents' beliefs, the authors found that although they were not explicit, they nevertheless had a significant influence on their children.

In studying children's mathematics achievement, Holloway and Hess (1985) and Dunton, McDevitt, and Hess (1988) found that although sons and daughters performed at equivalent levels, mothers' attribution for success and failure differed on the basis of children's sex. Mothers of boys attributed their success to ability and failure to lack of effort. On the other hand, mothers of girls attributed their success to effort and failure to lack of ability. These differential beliefs had a significant influence on how the children appraised their ability and on their attitudes toward school work.

Advantages to junior and high school students

Evidence linking parent involvement with children's performance in schools is based mainly on studies with elementary school children. Very few studies have been conducted with junior and high school students. However,

there are sufficient evidence to show that when parents of junior and high school students are involved in their education, their children also perform better in school. For instance, Dornbusch and Ritter's (1988) study of upper grade levels found that high school parents' attendance at school activities, such as athletic events and dramatic performances, positively correlated with school achievement, even when ethnic and social class differences were controlled. Additional inquiries about these findings revealed that when parents spent time at school, the children interpreted this as a demonstration of the value their parents attached to education. Also, parents were better able to communicate with their children after having seen the world in which their children spend much of the day. For example, Dornbusch and Ritter (1988) found that parents whose children tended to give distorted reports of events at school were better able to dialogue with their children after having gone to school to judge the situation for themselves.

Fehrmann, Keith, and Reimers (1987) provided additional evidence that links parent-school collaboration to high school students' better academic performance. Using 28,051 high school seniors, they examined effects of parent involvement on the students' grades and found that their grades showed more significant improvement than those of students whose parents were not involved. Jowett and Baginsky (1988) also studied the effects of parent involvement on secondary school students' grades in England and Wales

and found that the students' academic performance improved significantly when their parents became involved in their education.

Advantages to parents

When parents are involved in their children's education, they also benefit from the process. Epstein's (1990) study revealed that parents who were involved in their children's education experienced positive changes in their behaviors. These changes included better parenting skills, more positive parent-child relationships, and more positive parent-teacher relationships. Davies (1993) found that when Hispanic-American mothers were actively involved in their children's education, they had access to broader social networks through interactions with other parents, and developed confidence about their parenting skills and the motivation to continue their own education. In addition, Prosise (1990) observed that when parents were involved in their children's education, they developed a better understanding of the demands of teaching and a deeper appreciation for teachers and their work in the classroom.

Advantages to teachers

When parents are involved in their children's education, teachers also experience multiple benefits. Prosise (1990) observed that when parents volunteered in the classroom, the student-teacher ratio was lowered, opportu-

nities for individualized instruction increased, the workload of teachers reduced, and their morale and energy levels increased. In addition, Lombana (1983) stated that when teachers maintain regular contacts with parents through conferences, they become able to understand and deal with individual students more effectively. Through these interactions, teachers have the opportunity to gain an understanding of the communication patterns in the home, the lifestyle of the family, and other characteristics and situations that may influence a child's behaviors and attitudes in school.

However, for teachers to realize these benefits from conferences with parents, they need to conduct the conferences in ways that appeal to parents, because the preferences of parents may not necessarily be what teachers think they are. Lindle (1989) found that teachers and other school personnel tended to believe that conferences conducted in a professional and businesslike manner would win the respect and support of parents. On the contrary, when Jones (1991) asked parents about their preferred methods of contacts with schools, they indicated that they were uncomfortable with a formal professional-client relationship, that they preferred personal attention and timely information on an informal basis, and that they wanted to be treated as friends and equal partners in the education of their children.

Disadvantages of Parent Involvement

Although parent involvement in children's education has many advantages to students, teachers, and parents, these individuals also experience some disadvantages from the process. However, unlike the advantages, very little literature was available about the disadvantages of parent involvement. A study by Lareau (1989) revealed that parent involvement had negative consequences for individual children and family dynamics. He found that parents who were intensely involved in their children's education put more pressure on their children to do well in school. Instead, this pressure caused their children to develop performance anxieties and discipline problems in school. The families experienced negative encounters between parents and children, brothers and sisters, and husbands and wives as a result of stress caused by the children's failure to meet parents' expectations for performance. In addition, Lareau found that in schools where a high level of parent involvement was present, teachers took time away from teaching to coordinate and train parent volunteers. Teachers also felt pressured to teach mostly content they could justify to parents in order to avoid being criticized. Prosise (1990) speculated that some parent volunteers may have other motives besides helping teachers. For example, if a parent dislikes a teacher, he or she may use the opportunity to gather negative information to be used against the teacher.

Factors Influencing Parent-Involvement Practices of Teachers

Teachers' attitudes

In theory, most teachers support the idea of involving parents in the education of children. Reports (Moles, 1982) of a poll taken by the National Education Association (NEA) revealed that 90 percent of the teachers across the country and at all grade levels thought that more home-school interaction would be beneficial. Yet, teachers differed significantly in their parent-involvement practices. A study by Greenwood and Hickman (1991) showed that although some teachers worked to increase parent involvement in schools, others believed that when compared to benefits the problems involved were not worth their time and effort.

Davies (1988) also studied the views held by teachers who did not attempt to involve all parents in their children's education. Davies' interviews with these teachers revealed that they thought of low-income and low-status families as deficient and lacking the time, interest, and competence to help their children in school-related tasks. In addition, the teachers dwelt extensively on family conditions such as alcoholism and poor housing and rarely talked about strengths the families may have had. These judgments were illustrated by a teacher's statements (Chavkin, 1993):

As soon as I saw and talked to the mother, I knew the boy would be in big trouble. Well, what can we expect of these children? We do the best we can, but look at the homes they come from. (p. 208)

Chavkin (1989) and Epstein (1990) both found that teachers who did not involve parents made more stereotypical judgments about the involvement and abilities of less-educated, socioeconomically disadvantaged, single and minority parents. These parents were erroneously presumed to be uncaring about their children's education and to have no regard for education in general. Minority parents in particular were stereotyped by these teachers as uncooperative, unconcerned, and uncaring about their children's education. On the other hand, when upwardly-mobile minority parents wanted to be involved, they were described by teachers as pushy, demanding, and overly ambitious (Lightfoot, 1978).

Efforts to refute these views about low-income, low-status, and minority families caused Dauber and Epstein (1989) to argue that disadvantaged parents and families are not all the same, and that they should not be ignored as a resource in the education of their children. Other studies clearly refuted these stereotypes about disadvantaged and minority parents. Davies (1993) found that disadvantaged and minority parents expressed strong interest in their children's education, and talked about the importance of school and how they would like to be involved in helping their children. Ritter, Mont-Reynaud, and

Dornbusch (1993) offered similar evidence based on a study with African-American, Asian, and Hispanic parents. They found that African-American parents were very much involved in, and aware of, all aspects of their children's school activities and academic performance. The high number of college enrollments of African-American students from the lower-class families gave evidence of the parents' willingness and motivation to obtain advanced education for their children.

Another area used by Ritter, Mont-Reynaud, and Dornbusch to assess minority parents' concerns was the reaction displayed by them about their children's grades. The children were given a list of possible parent responses to good grades and bad grades, and were asked to indicate how often their parents reacted in each of the possible ways to good and bad grades. Parents were independently asked to complete the same task. Parents' data showed that African-American parents said they frequently rewarded good grades and reacted punitively to poor grades, while Hispanic and Asian parents reported similar but less frequent reactions. Analysis of the data from the children confirmed the parents' reports of their behaviors.

Training

Greenwood and Hickman (1991) and Moles (1993) suggested that some teachers simply do not have the skill or knowledge to build effective home-school collaborations. This is caused in part by the fact that many teachers do

not receive adequate pre-service preparation on how to work with parents and families. Chavkin and Williams (1988) surveyed 4,000 teacher educators to determine how they were preparing pre-service teachers in parent involvement. They found that only four percent taught a complete course on the topic, 15 percent taught part of a course, and 37 percent devoted one class period to it. In contrast, when teachers were asked if they needed training for working with parents and families, approximately 87 percent agreed that training was necessary. Ninety-two percent of the principals surveyed agreed.

Another area that revealed lack of attention to the skills required for parent involvement in teacher preparation programs was the teacher certification examinations. Through a content analysis of the professional knowledge subtests, Greenwood and Hankins (1989) found that six of ten different test instruments, including the National Teachers Examination, measured a category called "extra classroom influences" that included parent involvement. However, less than 2 percent of the 826 competencies included in the tests dealt with this category. Chavkin and Williams (1988) believed that such evidence suggests a lag in teacher preparation programs to prepare teachers for the increased parent involvement that other research showed was positively correlated with student achievement. In most cases, too, this lack of pre-service preparation was not compensated by in-service education.

Teacher efficacy

Teacher efficacy, a teacher's belief that he/she is an effective and capable teacher, was suggested by Hoover-Dempsey, Bassler, and Brissie (1987) as a variable that might influence teachers' practices of parent involvement. They asserted that such confidence would enhance teachers' efforts to seek contacts with parents, to suggest home learning activities for children, and to invite parents to contribute information that could be useful in the teaching process. In examining teacher efficacy in relation to student achievement, Ashton, Webb, and Doda (1983) incidentally discovered that low levels of teacher efficacy played a significant part in reducing parent-teacher contact. According to them, high efficacy implied confidence in teaching ability, a sense of professionalism, and security in the teaching role. Power (1985) observed that an efficacious teacher was less likely to feel threatened by parents who questioned his/her professional competence or blame him/her for their children's poor performance in the classroom.

Education

Teachers' levels of education were also associated with differential practices of parent involvement. Baker and Epstein (1982) and Corwin and Wagenaar (1976) found that although teachers with higher levels of education, for example, a master's degree, had more positive attitudes toward parent involvement, they also had fewer contacts and more disputes with parents.

Corwin and Wagenaar suggested that a higher level of education may tend to increase teachers' autonomy, causing them to withdraw from parents.

Factors Influencing Involvement Practices of Parents

Studies (Dauber & Epstein, 1989; Davies, 1993; Ritter, Mont-Reynaud, & Dornbusch, 1993) clearly show that all parents, regardless of ethnicity and socioeconomic backgrounds, are concerned with their children's education. Most importantly, they want to take an active role in their children's education. The majority of parents want to spend time with their children and to make certain that they perform well in school. However, changes in the demographic profile of the nation and levels of parental efficacy, along with changes in family structures and the changes in the ways adults spend their time (i.e., at home or at work), have significantly lowered the desired level of collaboration between parents and their children's schools.

Changes in demographic profile

Although America in the past liked to think of itself as a "melting pot," different racial and ethnic groups are easily seen throughout the society and their proportion is expected to increase. Projections based on fertility and immigration trends indicate that by the year 2000, 33 percent of the school-age population will be minorities, an increase of 13 percent since 1986 (Select Committee on Children, Youth, and Families, 1985; Baker & Ogle, 1989). This

may mean that unique cultures and ways of life may more likely be retained and permeate all facets of lifestyles, including aspects related to education.

Cultural differences among ethnic groups were found to be strong predictors of how parents chose to relate to schools and what they considered an appropriate level of involvement. Ritter, Mont-Reynaud, and Dornbusch (1993) observed that in many Asian countries decisions regarding educational matters are made by ministries of education without input from parents. Consequently, parents felt inadequate questioning the work of educators and contributing to school matters, especially if they had limited education and little or no understanding of the educational process. When immigrating to America, these parents maintained their traditional patterns of relating to schools, continuing to believe that they were more helpful by separating themselves from the schools. This gap, according to Moles (1993) was further widened by the parents' limited ability to communicate in English.

Similarly, Griffore and Boger (1986) observed that many Hispanic parents chose to maintain a distance between themselves and schools because of their uncomfortable feelings and fears caused by limited communication skills in English, and a perceived lack of sensitivity to their culture by non-minority school personnel.

Parental efficacy

Swick (1988) suggested parental efficacy as a strong predictor of parents' willingness and desire to be involved in their children's education. Swick observed that regardless of ethnic or socioeconomic background, parents who were effective and confident in their parenting roles engaged in more involvement than parents who displayed less confidence. As an extension of Swick's work, White (1988) studied levels of parental involvement in home-based educational activities with children from birth to three years of age and identified nurturing behaviors, clear and consistent discipline techniques, supportive attitudes at home, and skills in designing home learning experiences as parental attributes and behaviors that were related to productive patterns of involvement. Earlier, Watson (1981) focused on behaviors of parents with adolescents at home, and found that parents who felt confident in their parenting role exceeded other parents in the amount of time they spent in interactive activities with their children and the extent and breadth of those activities.

Changing family structures

Changes in family structures have also likely impacted parents' collaboration with schools. In 1960, 60 percent of U.S. households consisted of one working parent and one parent that stayed home full-time with one or more child. By 1990, only 3 percent of households could be so described. The U.S.

Bureau of Census (1991) reported that 15 percent of all households had only one parent and that 24 percent of all children lived in these households. Also, a significant portion of today's students are from homes where the single parent or both parents work full-time outside the home. Naturally, these parents experience a significant time constraint in their lives, preventing them from being as involved in their children's education as they would like (Prosise, 1990). As Albert (1984) observed, the problem was compounded for these parents because school activities designed to bring families and schools together are often scheduled during working hours and at night when parents do not have access to child care.

Single parents in particular may have difficulty establishing home-school collaborations due to psychological barriers brought on by educators' insensitivities. Fuller (1984) and Moles (1987) noted that some educators often referred to single-parent homes as "broken" and assumed that all the problems of children from these homes were caused by this characteristic. Because of these negative stereotypes, single parents hesitated to have meaningful relationships with the schools.

Although single parents are less likely than their two-parent counterparts to interact with schools, studies by Epstein (1984, 1988) showed that they were more likely to help their children at home with school work. Also, Epstein (1984) found that teachers who were leaders in parent involvement rated both

single and married parents as equally helpful and responsible with home-learning activities, while non-leader teachers made more demands on single parents and rated them as less helpful and responsible. These findings confirmed earlier observations by Becker and Epstein (1982) that teachers' attitudes, not the marital or working status of parents, made a significant difference in whether or not parents chose to work with schools to educate their children.

Summary

Schools and parents need to form effective partnerships in their efforts to educate children and adolescents. By forming such partnerships, they can develop the safe and secure environment children need to grow and learn. Studies conducted over the years have convincingly shown that children at all grade levels perform more successfully in school if their parents and significant family members participate in their educational process. Studies have also shown positive outcomes, such as better parenting skills for parents and opportunities for more individualized instruction for teachers, when they work as partners.

Considering the advantages of home and school partnerships, one would expect that parents and educators would be natural allies in their efforts to provide educational experiences for children. However, studies show that although most educators and parents favor the idea of stronger home and

school partnerships, a gap remains between the two institutions. This gap is created by several factors, including teachers' attitudes toward parent involvement, lack of training for parent involvement, and levels of teaching efficacy, changes in demographic profiles among parents, level of parental efficacy, and changes in family structure. Efforts to bring families and schools closer together in the education of children can be made stronger by the family and consumer sciences education profession, uniquely skilled in both the process of education and the integrative expertise for understanding and working with the ecological system of the family. However, there is a need for empirical studies to help verify whether family and consumer sciences teachers are capitalizing on their expertise to bring parents and schools together for the purpose of providing the best possible environments for children to learn. This study seeks to assess junior and high school family and consumer sciences teachers concerning their involvement of parents in the educational process.

CHAPTER III. METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study was to assess Iowa junior and senior high school family and consumer sciences teachers concerning the involvement of parents in their educational process of children. Specific research objectives were to:

1. assess the attitudes of Iowa junior and high school family and consumer sciences teachers toward parent involvement
2. describe the teachers' practices of parent involvement
3. assess the sense of personal teaching efficacy of junior high and high school family and consumer sciences teachers
4. assess the level of support the teachers believe others in their schools and communities hold for parent involvement
5. determine whether or not there are identifiable relationships among selected demographic variables, attitudes, sense of personal teaching efficacy, beliefs about the level of support and practices
6. determine whether or not teachers' attitudes, practices, sense of personal teaching efficacy and perceived level of support differ by educational levels, level of in-service education about parent involvement, grade level(s) taught and teaching of other subject area(s) in addition to family and consumer sciences

7. based on the results related to the previous six objectives, make recommendations for improvements in family and consumer sciences teacher education programs.

Research Design

A descriptive and correlational research design including path analysis was employed in this study. Correlational research design is used to study relationships between two or more variables. Path analysis as a correlational research design is used to test theories about hypothesized causal links between variables. It enables a researcher to disentangle all possible connections between variables suggested by the correlation matrix (Borg & Gall, 1989).

According to Touliatos and Compton (1988), descriptive research seeks to arrive at comprehensive quantitative descriptions of the current characteristics of some defined population or a sample of that population with respect to one or more variables. Descriptive research is typically used to assess attitudes or opinions toward events, concepts or procedures in order to gain more understanding of the current status of the phenomenon being studied. However, descriptive research can be used to accomplish much more than routine fact gathering. It is frequently used to identify and clarify relationships among variables (Van Dalen, 1979). Over the years, researchers in the field of education have employed descriptive research methods to generate a signifi-

cant amount of information to help in making informed decisions for improving education practices. Data collected from this study have the potential to help family and consumer sciences teacher educators make informed decisions as to whether or not to include appropriate development of parent-involvement skills in the preparation of new family and consumer sciences teachers.

Population and Sample

The population for this study consisted of all junior and senior high school family and consumer sciences teachers in public schools in Iowa listed in the 1992-1993 directory prepared by the Iowa Department of Education, the most current list that was available. However, the study was conducted during the 1993-1994 school year. Each name on the list was assigned a three-digit number from 001 to 682, and a sample of 227 (33%) of the 682 teachers was selected using a table of random numbers.

Instrument Development

An extensive search of the literature related to parent involvement in the educational process provided the basis for the inclusion of six components in the research instrument. They were:

1. attitudes toward parent involvement
2. practices of parent involvement
3. sense of personal teaching efficacy

4. teachers' beliefs about the level of support for parent involvement
5. experience and background information
6. general thoughts about parent involvement.

Attitudes toward parent involvement

Part 1 of the instrument was designed to assess family and consumer sciences teachers' attitudes toward parent involvement in children's education. Twelve of the 16 items used in this section were adapted with permission (Appendix F) from nineteen attitude items originally developed by elementary, junior high and high school teachers in Baltimore in collaboration with researchers at Johns Hopkins University's Center on Families, Communities, Schools and Children's Learning (Epstein, Connors, Salinas, 1993). Teachers from eight schools were invited to attend a two-day summer workshop to learn about the process of developing stronger school and family partnership programs. At the end of the workshop, the teachers were asked to help in designing and pilot-testing teacher, parent, and student questionnaires for each of the eight schools to use in identifying their strengths and weaknesses in relation to school and family partnerships. Four new items were also developed by the researcher, yielding a total of 16 items used in assessing teachers' attitudes toward parent involvement. Teachers were asked to indicate the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with each of the items. A five-point Likert scale for recording responses was used.

Practices of parent involvement

Part 2 of the questionnaire was designed to assess family and consumer sciences teachers' practices of parent involvement. A total of 21 items representing six different types of involvement practices that teachers can use were adapted from the Johns Hopkins University's questionnaire and used in this section. Teachers were asked to indicate how important it was for them to incorporate six different types of parent-involvement practices into their teaching. It was hoped that responses to these items would serve as a proxy for actual parent-involvement practices of the teachers. This proxy method was also used by Stallworth (1982) and Epstein and Dauber (1991) because it was judged to be less intrusive for the teachers.

Personal teaching efficacy

Part 3 was designed to assess teachers' sense of their personal teaching efficacy, that is, whether they believe that they are effective and capable teachers. This section was included in the study because earlier studies suggested that teachers who have confidence in their teaching abilities are more likely to involve parents in their children's education (Hoover-Dempsey & Brissie, 1987; Epstein & Dauber, 1989). Twelve items were used in this section, eleven were adapted with permission (see Appendix F) from an instrument developed for assessing teachers' efficacy by Ashton, Webb and Doda (1984) and later expanded and improved by Woolfolk and Hoy (1990),

and the twelfth item developed by the researcher based on information gathered during the review of literature. Teachers were asked to indicate the extent to which they agreed or disagreed that they were effective and capable teachers. A five-point Likert scale for recording responses was used.

Belief about the level of support for parent involvement

Part 4 was designed to assess the level of support family and consumer sciences teachers believe they themselves, other teachers, the principal, superintendent, counselors, parents, the community, school board members, and other administrators and students hold for parent involvement in their schools. Teachers were asked to respond using a five-point Likert-type scale.

Experience and background information

Part 5 consisted of 11 questions designed to identify information from teachers about their experiences regarding parent involvement and other basic data. The first two questions in this section asked teachers to indicate whether they have had in-service education in parent involvement since they started teaching and if so, the nature of the in-service education. The rest of the questions requested information about years of teaching experience, level of education, racial background, grade level(s) at which they taught, teaching appointment (whether full- or part-time), other subject area(s) they taught in addition to family and consumer sciences, gender, age and salary range.

General thoughts

The last section, Part 6, contained three open-ended questions. They encouraged teachers to share thoughts about successful practice about which they have heard or used to involve parents, the type(s) of preparation teachers need to help them strengthen school and home partnerships, and obstacle(s) they see in building stronger links between families and schools at their schools.

Pilot Testing of Instrument

After many drafts and revisions, a semi-final version of the instrument was developed. To further refine the instrument, three high school and junior high school family and consumer sciences teachers who were not included in the final sample were given the instrument and the objectives of the study and asked to evaluate the instrument in terms of the contents, clarity, and readability of each item. Further revisions were made based on their suggestions.

A refined instrument was then prepared and sent with a cover letter to 25 junior and senior high school family and consumer sciences teachers who met the same criteria as the final sample but were not included in the final sample. The teachers were asked to respond to the items and to suggest ways the instrument could be improved. Completed questionnaires were returned by ten teachers. These questionnaires were examined for comments and suggestions from the teachers. Based on the comments made by few

teachers, the scale for items in section two of the instrument was revised because the original scale appeared to be confusing to the teachers. Following the revision, the final version of the instrument was printed in a booklet form for mailing to the final sample (Appendix A).

Human Subjects Review

The Iowa State University Committee on the Use of Human Subjects in Research reviewed and approved the instrument for this study (Appendix B).

Data Collection

Data for this study were collected using a mailed questionnaire during March, April, and May 1994. Questionnaires were mailed to 227 junior high and senior high school family and consumer science teachers. Personalized and signed cover letters (Appendix C) printed on original letterhead of the Department of Family and Consumer Sciences Education and Studies explained the purpose of the study, requested participation and assured participants of the confidentiality with which their responses would be handled. Questionnaires were numbered for ease in identifying returns and following up with nonrespondents.

Three weeks after the questionnaires were mailed, follow-up postcards (Appendix D) were sent to 118 teachers who had not responded by the date specified in the cover letter. A week after the follow-up postcard was mailed,

a total of 133 questionnaires (59%) had been returned. On April 12, three weeks after the follow-up postcard, a new cover letter (Appendix E) and another copy of the questionnaire were mailed to those who had still not responded (Appendix E).

On May 6, data collection was terminated. By that date, 171 teachers had returned their questionnaires. Of the 171 questionnaires returned, three were not completed for the following reasons: one teacher returned an unanswered questionnaire with a note saying that she was not a family and consumer sciences teacher and that her name was on the list by mistake, one teacher had been ill throughout the school year and was not at work, and one teacher said that the questionnaire was too long for her to complete. After two of these teachers were excluded from the original sample of 227 teachers, a response rate of 75% (168 out of 225) was obtained.

Data Analysis

All analyses of data were done using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences, Release 4 (SPSS Inc., 1990). Descriptive statistics including frequencies, percentages, means and standard deviations were calculated to analyze teachers' attitudes toward parent involvement, teachers' practices of parent involvement, teachers' sense of personal teaching efficacy, teachers' perceived level of support for parent involvement and background information from teachers. Factor analysis was performed on the sections related to

teachers' attitudes toward parent involvement and teachers' sense of personal teaching efficacy. Reliability coefficients for estimating internal consistency were computed for the attitudes, practices and efficacy sections.

The relationships among teachers' professed level of support for parent involvement and their practices were examined using Pearson product-moment correlation coefficients. Relationships among selected demographic variables, teachers' attitudes, teachers' sense of personal teaching efficacy, teachers' perceived level of support for parent involvement and teachers' practices of parent involvement were examined using path analysis. Finally, t-tests and one-way analysis of variance were calculated to examine whether attitudes, practices, efficacy and perceived level of support differed by teachers' levels of education, grade level(s) taught, and the teaching of other subject areas in addition to family and consumer sciences.

CHAPTER IV. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to assess Iowa junior and senior high school family and consumer sciences teachers concerning their involvement of parents in the educational process of children. Specific objectives were to:

1. assess attitudes toward parent involvement
2. describe parent involvement practices
3. assess the sense of personal teaching efficacy
4. assess the level of support they believe others in their schools and communities hold for parent involvement
5. determine relationships among selected demographic variables, attitudes, sense of personal teaching efficacy, beliefs about the level of support and practices
6. determine whether or not their attitudes, practices, sense of teaching efficacy and perceived level of support held by others differ by educational level, grade level taught, and teaching of other subjects in addition to family and consumer sciences
7. based on the results related to the previous six objectives, make recommendations for improvements in family and consumer sciences teacher education programs.

A survey instrument (Appendix A) relating to school and home partnerships was developed and used to collect data for the study. The instrument

consisted of six sections: 1) attitudes toward parent involvement, 2) practices of parent involvement, 3) personal teaching efficacy, 4) beliefs about the level of support from others for parent involvement, 5) experience and background information, and 6) general thoughts about parent involvement.

The population for this study consisted of all middle, junior and senior high school family and consumer sciences teachers in public schools in Iowa listed in the 1992-1993 school year directory prepared by the Iowa Department of Education, the most current list available. However, the study was conducted during the 1993-1994 school year. A sample of 227 (33%) of the 682 teachers was selected using a table of random numbers. Mailed questionnaires with personalized cover letters (Appendix C) were used to collect data. Data were analyzed using frequencies, factor analysis, analysis of variance, t-tests, Pearson product-moment correlation, and path analysis. Findings are based on completed surveys received from 168 (75%) teachers.

Results from the analysis of data are presented and discussed in the following sections: 1) experience and background, 2) attitudes toward parent involvement, 3) practices of parent involvement, 4) perceptions of personal teaching efficacy, 5) support held by others, 6) relationships among demographics, attitudes, efficacy, support and practices, 7) differences in attitudes, practices, efficacy and support by selected variables, 8) analysis of open-ended responses, and 9) recommendations for teacher education.

Experience and Background

Teachers were asked, in Part 5, to report about any in-service education they had experienced on the topic of parent involvement since they started teaching and the nature of the in-service education. Demographic information on the years they had been teaching, level of education, racial background, the grade level(s) they taught, if they taught full-time or not, subject area(s) they taught in addition to family and consumer sciences, gender, age, and annual salary for the 1993-94 school year were also requested. The number of responses may not always total 168 because in some cases items had multiple responses.

In-service education on parent involvement

As shown in Table 1, only 54 (32%) teachers reported that they had in-service education on parent involvement since they started teaching. This suggests that schools consider increasing the level of in-service programs for their teachers especially if they are to achieve the goals specified in "Goals 2000: Educate America Act." Another solution for new professionals would be to add education on this topic to current pre-service programs.

Years of teaching experience

Data in Table 2 are significant because of validation of the concern that insufficient numbers of new professionals are entering the family and consumer

Table 1. Types of in-service education on parent involvement attended by teachers (N = 54)

Types of In-service	Number of Teachers	Percent
Seminar or workshop (1 hour to half day)	31	18
Major conference (1 day or more)	8	5
College courses	13	8
Other	2	1

Table 2. Number of years of teaching experience (N = 168)

Years	Number of Teachers	Percent
1 to 10	29	17
11 to 20	72	43
21 to 30	52	31
31 to 40	9	5
No response	6	4

sciences teaching field. This is shown by the small proportion of teachers with ten or fewer years of experience compared to the larger percents in the next two groups.

Educational level of teachers

As Table 3 indicates, all teachers in the sample held bachelors degrees. One hundred and eight teachers (64%) reported having a bachelors degree plus additional credit, 13 (8%) reported having a masters degree and 44 (26%) reported having a masters degree plus additional credits. None reported having earned the doctoral degree.

Table 3. Educational level of teachers (N = 168)

Degree	Number of Teachers	Percent
Bachelors	3	2
Bachelors + credits	108	64
Masters	13	8
Masters + credits	44	26

Racial background

All teachers in the sample (N = 168) reported Caucasian as their racial background. This result indicates the need for more effort on the part of those in charge of marketing family and consumer sciences education programs in colleges and universities in the State of Iowa to attract students from other racial backgrounds into the program.

Grade level(s) that teachers taught

Teachers were asked to indicate whether they taught middle school (grades 6-8), junior high school (grades 7-9), high school (grades 9-12) or senior high school (grades 10-12). As shown in Table 4, 59 teachers (35%) reported teaching middle school, 61 teachers (36%) reported teaching junior high, 108 teachers (64%) taught high school and 39 teachers (23%) taught senior high school.

Table 4. School levels at which teachers taught (N-168)

Grade Level	Number of Teachers^a	Percent
High School	108	64
Junior High School	61	36
Middle School	59	35
Senior High School	39	23

^aMultiple responses were possible; therefore, the total is not equal to N.

Appointment status of teachers

From the 168 teachers who responded, 133 (79%) reported having a full-time appointment while 35 teachers (21%) reported having part-time appointments. From the 35 that reported part-time appointments, 2 teachers (1%) had a 25% appointment, 11 teachers (6%) had appointments ranging from 26 to 50%, 20 teachers (12%) had appointments ranging from 51 to 75%, and 4 teachers (2%) had appointments in the 76 to 80% range (Table 5). These findings may serve to refute the myth that family and consumer sciences education teachers in Iowa's schools are now being offered mostly part-time appointments. A comparison of these findings with those of Drizou (1993) who studied a random sample of the same population reveals that more teachers were holding full-time appointments in the 1993-1994 school year.

Table 5. Appointment status of teachers (N = 168)

Appointment	Number of Teachers	Percent
Full-time	133	79
Part-time	35	21
25%	2	6
26-50%	11	31
51-75%	20	57
76-80%	2	6

than in the 1991-1992 school year. Specifically, the number of teachers with full-time appointments increased by 2% (from 77% to 79%) within the two-year time interval. Moreover, of those 35 teachers who had part-time appointments in the 1993-1994 school year, 20 (57%) of them had appointments in the 51 to 75% range, an increase of 19% from the percent indicated in the 1991-1992 school year.

Additional subject areas taught by family and consumer sciences teachers

One-hundred and three (61%) of the 168 teachers reported that they taught only family and consumer sciences. As Table 6 reveals, of the

Table 6. Other subject areas taught by family and consumer sciences teachers (N = 65)

Subject Areas	Number of Teachers^a	Percent
Health	48	74
Science	8	12
Math	5	8
English/Language Arts	5	8
Social Studies	3	5
Business	2	3
Physical Education	1	2
Others	20	31

^aMultiple responses are possible; therefore, the total is not equal N.

remaining 65 (39%) who reported also teaching something else, three-fourths were teaching health. Other subject areas reported to be taught by family and consumer science teachers are also presented in the table.

Gender and age

Of the 168 teachers who responded to the survey, only one was male. Teachers in the sample (Figure 1) ranged in age from 20 to 66 years with a mean age of 46.7 years. The figure also shows that almost half of the

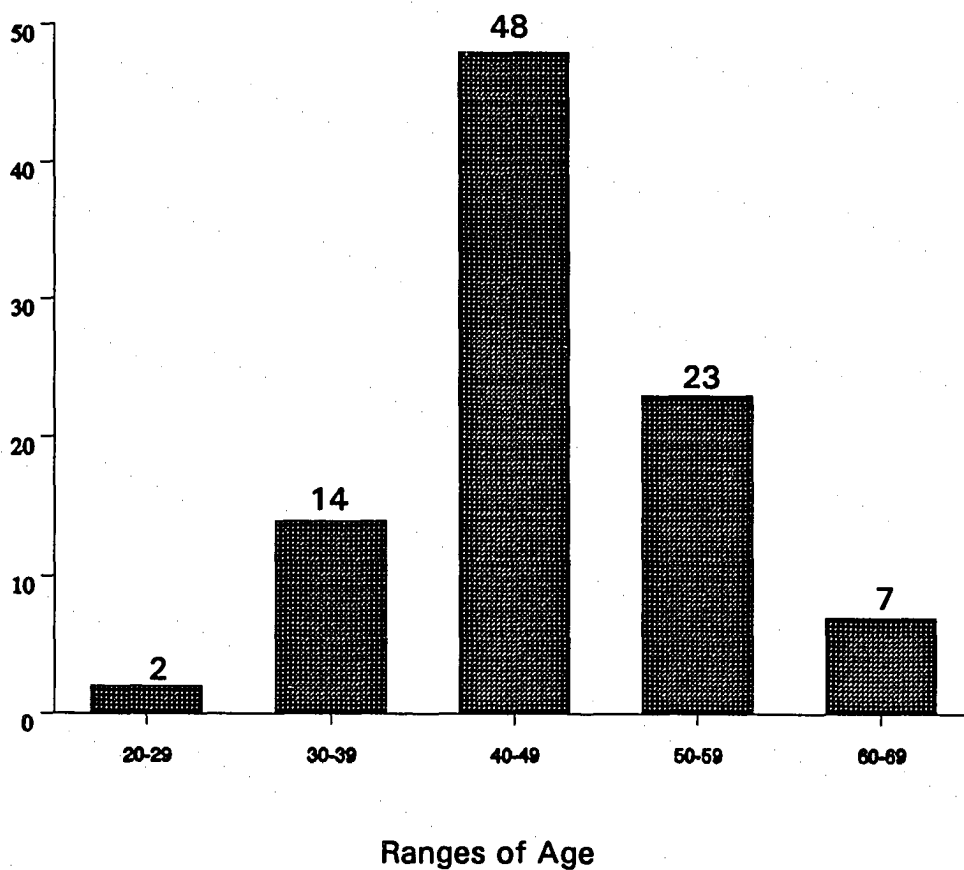


Figure 1. Age of teachers

teachers (48%) are in the 40 to 49 year old range. The second largest group of teachers (23%) is comprised of those in the range of 50 to 59 years of age. This reveals that 78% of the teachers are between the ages of 40 and 69 years. A comparison of these figures with those of Drizou (1993) for the 1991-1992 school year reveals that the number of teachers in the age groups of 20 to 29 and 30 to 39 has decreased from 4% to 2% and 23% to 14%, respectively, while those in the age group of 40 to 49 and 60 to 69 years have increased from 43% to 48% and 3% to 7%, respectively. However, a decrease of 3% was found in the number of teachers in the age group of 50 to 59 years.

These findings reveal the need to prepare new family and consumer sciences teachers in a significant number so that they can replace the older teachers who are nearing retirement age within the next five to ten years.

Annual salary for teachers in the 1993-1994 school year

As Table 7 shows, 86 percent of the full-time teachers were earning between \$20,000 and \$39,999 during the 1993-1994 school year, with the majority (29%) earning \$30,000 to \$34,999. Thirteen percent earned between \$40,000 and \$49,999. Full-time teachers who reported earning \$15,000 to \$19,999 were predominantly from the group of those teachers who had one to ten years of teaching experience. In the 1993-1994 school year, the average annual salary for an Iowa full-time teacher was \$33,123

Table 7. Annual salary of Iowa family and consumer sciences teachers in the 1993-1994 school year

Salary	Number of Teachers	Percent
<u>Full time teachers</u>		
\$15,000 to \$19,999	2	1
\$20,000 to \$24,999	24	18
\$25,000 to \$29,999	29	22
\$30,000 to \$34,999	39	29
\$35,000 to \$39,999	22	17
\$40,000 to \$44,999	11	8
\$45,000 to \$49,999	6	5
<u>Part-time teachers</u>		
Less than \$10,000	3	8
\$10,000 to \$14,999	9	26
\$15,000 to \$19,999	12	34
\$20,000 to \$24,999	7	20
\$25,000 to \$29,999	1	3
\$30,000 to \$34,999	1	3
\$35,000 to \$39,999	0	0
\$40,000 to \$44,999	1	3
\$45,000 to \$49,999	1	3

(Digest of Educational Statistics, 1993). However, for the present 1993-1994 study, an average salary cannot be calculated for full-time teachers because teachers were asked to report their salary in ranges of \$5,000.

Among part-time teachers, 80 percent reported earning between \$10,000 and \$24,999, with the majority (34%) earning \$15,000 to \$19,999 during the 1993-1994 school year. Twelve percent of the part-time teachers reported earning between \$25,000 and \$49,999. Part-time teachers who reported earning less than \$10,000 usually had fewer years of teaching experience and a lower percentage of teaching appointment.

Teachers' Attitudes Toward Parent Involvement

To assess family and consumer sciences teachers' attitudes about parent involvement in children's education, the teachers were asked, in Part 1 of the questionnaire, to respond to 16 attitude statements. Responses were recorded on a five-point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree (coded as 1) to strongly agree (coded as 5). Responses to each statement were expected to give a measure of how positive or negative teachers felt about parent involvement in children's education, with high values indicating positive attitudes about parent involvement and low values indicating negative attitudes. Three items (11, 15, and 16) that were negatively worded were recoded before the analysis so that all items had the higher number representing the more positive attitude.

In the first analysis, a confirmatory factor analysis was performed on the 16 items to see whether they were all representing the intended five dimensions of attitudes toward parent involvement. As shown by the strength of the factor loadings (all above .45 as found in Table 8), the factor analysis confirmed that all 16 items were measuring attitudes toward parent involvement. Cronbach's alpha coefficient of internal consistency was also calculated for the 16 items and an alpha of 0.67 was obtained. For reaching conclusions about groups, a reliability coefficient in the range of 0.30 to 0.50 is acceptable (Ary, Jacobs, and Raxavich, 1990, p. 281).

To reach conclusions about the attitudes of teachers toward parent involvement, means for each item and a total mean were computed. As the total mean of 3.78 in Table 9 shows, the family and consumer sciences teachers did not have strong positive opinions about parent involvement. Teachers agreed or strongly agreed with six of the 16 items (2, 4, 5, 9, 12, and 14), as shown by means above 4.0. These indicate three things regarding attitudes about parent involvement. Teachers have positive attitudes regarding the usefulness that parent involvement has for students, teachers, and the school as a whole, believe all parents regardless of socio-economic, ethnic or educational background, can contribute to their children's success in school, believe they should receive training for parent involvement and, where possible, that the training should be in a course at the undergraduate level.

Table 8. Item loadings on five dimensions of the attitude scale

Factor	Factor Loadings	Items
<u>Usefulness</u>		
	.64	2) Parent involvement can increase teacher effectiveness.
	.78	5) Parent involvement is important for a school to be good.
	.75	9) Parent involvement is important for student success in middle and high school.
	.51	14) If parents would do more for their children, I could do more.
<u>Training</u>		
	.68	8) Teachers need in-service education to implement effective parent-involvement practices.
	.82	12) Professional training of teachers at the undergraduate level should include information on working with parents.
<u>Beliefs</u>		
	.58	1) Parents will assist their children with schoolwork at home if they know what to do.
	.59	3) Parents of middle and high school students want to be involved in their children's education.
	.59	4) Every family has strengths that can be tapped to increase their children's success in school.
	.73	7) Parents do more good than harm when helping students with school work at home.
	.61	13) Teachers should receive recognition for time spent on parent-involvement activities.
	.71	16) Parents don't want to learn how to be involved in their children's education.
<u>Responsibility</u>		
	.78	6) Involving parents in their children's education is the teacher's responsibility.
	.48	10) Teachers can influence parents to support their children at home with school-related tasks.
<u>Overburdened</u>		
	.71	11) Middle and high school teachers are too overburdened to work with parents in meaningful ways.
	.46	15) Too much parent involvement can hinder a school from doing its best job.

Table 9. Frequencies, percents, mean scores and standard deviations for the 16 items measuring teachers' attitudes toward parent involvement in children's education (N = 168)

Item	Strongly Disagree 1	Disagree 2	No Opinion 3	Agree 4	Strongly Agree 5	No Response	Mean	Standard Deviation
1. Parents will assist their children with schoolwork at home if they know what to do	0 0%	16 10%	12 7%	122 73%	15 9%	3 1%	3.824	.72
2. Parent involvement can increase teacher effectiveness	0 0%	1 .6%	2 1%	50 30%	115 69%		4.661	.53
3. Parents of middle and high school students want to be involved in their children's education	1 .6%	29 17%	21 12%	105 63%	11 7%	1 .6%	3.575	.87
4. Every family has strengths that can be tapped to increase their children's success in school	0 0%	17 10%	8 5%	95 56%	48 29%		4.036	.86
5. Parent involvement is important for a school to be good	0 0%	1 .6%	2 1%	61 36%	104 62%		4.595	.55

Table 9. (Continued)

Item	Strongly Disagree 1	Disagree 2	No Opinion 3	Agree 4	Strongly Agree 5	No Response	Mean	Standard Deviation
6. Involving parents in their children's education is the teacher's responsibility	9 5%	77 46%	30 18%	51 30%	1 .6%		2.750	.97
7. Parents do more good than harm when helping students with school work at home	10 6%	65 39%	14 8%	70 42%	9 5%		3.018	1.1
8. Teachers need in-service education to implement effective parent-involvement practices	0 0%	14 8%	19 11%	108 64%	26 16%	1 .6%	3.874	.77
9. Parent involvement is important for student success in middle and high school	0 0%	4 2%	8 5%	98 58%	58 35%		4.250	.65

Table 9. (Continued)

Item	Strongly Disagree 1	Disagree 2	No Opinion 3	Agree 4	Strongly Agree 5	No Response	Mean	Standard Deviation
10. Teachers can influence parents to support their children at home with school-related tasks	2 1%	14 8%	16 10%	123 73%	13 8%		3.780	.75
11. Middle and high school teachers are too overburdened to work with parents in meaningful ways*	8 5%	61 36%	25 15%	70 42%	4 2%		3.06	1.0
12. Professional training of teachers at the undergraduate level should include information on working with parents	0 0%	0 0%	7 4%	108 64%	53 32%		4.274	.53
13. Teachers should receive recognition for time spent on parent-involvement activities	0 0%	15 9%	35 21%	87 52%	31 18%		3.798	.84

Table 9. (Continued)

Item	Strongly Disagree 1	Disagree 2	No Opinion 3	Agree 4	Strongly Agree 5	No Response	Mean	Standard Deviation
14. If parents would do more for their children, I could do more	0 0%	9 6%	19 11%	89 53%	51 30%		4.083	.79
15. Too much parent involvement can hinder a school from doing its best job*	0 0%	42 25%	26 15%	82 49%	18 11%		3.452	.98
16. Parents don't want to learn how to be involved in their children's education*	3 2%	23 14%	37 22%	90 53%	15 9%		3.542	.90
Total Mean							3.782	.32

1 = Strongly disagree; 2 = Disagree; 3 = No opinion; 4 = Agree; 5 = Strongly agree

*Scoring has been reversed for items that, when answered in the affirmative would indicate a negative attitude toward parent involvement.

Teachers agreed least with the belief that involving parents in their children's education is the teacher's responsibility (Item 6, mean = 2.5). It is puzzling that teachers agreed that training of teachers at the undergraduate level should include information on working with parents, yet teachers disagreed that involving parents in their children's education was their responsibility. This seems to indicate that although teachers would like to have skills in parent involvement, they are not willing to assume the responsibility for operationalizing the process. Since there was no item to determine who they believe should assume this responsibility, it is not clear who they would see doing so in their place. Such an item should be added in future studies.

In summary, teachers appear to agree that parent involvement can increase teacher effectiveness, that every family has strengths that can be tapped to increase their children's success in school, and that parent involvement is important for a school to be good, for students to be successful in school, and for teachers to be able to do more. They believe that teachers should receive training in parent involvement at the undergraduate level. On the other hand, they appear less willing to support the belief that it is the teacher's responsibility to involve parents in their children's education.

Teachers' Practices of Parent Involvement

By responding to 21 items in Part 2 of the questionnaire describing six types of parent-involvement practices that can be used to involve parents,

teachers indicated how important each was to incorporate into their teaching. Cronbach's alpha coefficient of internal consistency was calculated separately for each of the six types of practices. Cronbach's alpha coefficient of internal consistency is a method of estimating instrument reliability when the response format is arranged as a midpoint continuum, for example, strongly agree, agree, disagree, and strongly disagree (Touliatos & Compton, 1988). According to these authors, reliability is a basic characteristic that every instrument must possess if good research is to be achieved because it gives an indication of how much confidence can be placed in research results. The results reported in Table 10 indicate that the items are fairly stable in their ability to measure practices.

Teachers' mean ratings of importance for the sum of all items and for each of the 21 parent-involvement practices are shown in Table 11. The total mean score of 3.692 on the 1 to 5 scale for the 21 items indicates that overall the teachers judged most of the practices as somewhat important (3.0) to very important (4.0) to incorporate into their teaching. Mean scores on five of the 21 items were above 4.0, indicating that they were judged very important (4.0) to extremely important (5.0). Each had in common the fact that the teacher played the leading or controlling role in the practice.

Four of the five items (7, 11, 13, 17) that teachers judged very important to extremely important to incorporate into their teaching represent one of

Table 10. Cronbach's alpha coefficient of internal consistency for each of six categories of items about parent-involvement practices

Categories of parent involvement practices and individual items	Cronbach's alpha coefficients
Basic obligations of families	.75
2) Help parents develop better parenting skills	
5) Help parents learn how to talk to their children about good health practices and sexual behavior	
8) Provide ideas to parents about what they can do to enhance their children's independence and self-confidence	
Basic obligations of schools	.77
7) Contact parents when their children do something well or show improvement in class performance	
11) Have at least one conference each year with a parent of each of my students	
13) Contact parents when their children have problems or experience failure	
17) Help parents understand how their children earn grades in my classes	
19) Inform parents about the skills their children should have to pass my class	
Involvement at school	.81
3) Invite parents to visit and observe my classroom	
10) Invite parents to assist me with learning activities in the classroom or lab	
14) Invite parents to assist me with class field trips	
20) Involve parents as volunteers in my classrooms	

Table 10. (Continued)

Categories of parent-involvement practices and individual items	Cronbach's alpha coefficients
Involvement in learning activities at home	.70
1) Provide ways to help parents keep track of their children's homework 4) Assign homework that requires my students to talk and share ideas with someone at home 9) Ask parents to help their children practice difficult concepts and skills 16) Provide specific activities that parents can do to help their children improve their grades	
Involvement in decision-making, governance/advocacy	.63
6) Work with parents to decide the amount of homework I assign to students 12) Work on school policy committees with parents 15) Work with parents to set standards and procedures for student discipline 18) Work with parents to set goals for classroom learning	
Collaboration and exchanges with others/community organizations	NA *
21) Collaborate with other teachers to develop parent-involvement activities and materials	

*1-item scale.

Table 11. Frequencies, percents, mean scores and standard deviations for the 21 items measuring teachers' indications of how important the practices of parent involvement are in their teaching

Item	1	2	3	4	5	No Response	Mean	Standard Deviation
1. Provide ways to help parents keep track of their children's homework	5 3%	27 16%	63 38%	54 32%	19 11%		3.327	.97
2. Help parents develop better parenting skills	2 1%	4 2%	28 17%	59 35%	75 45%		4.196	.88
3. Invite parents to visit and observe my classroom	1 .6%	18 11%	70 42%	64 38%	15 9%		3.440	.82
4. Assign homework that requires my students to talk and share ideas with someone at home	0 0%	3 2%	42 25%	85 51%	38 23%		3.940	.74

1 = Not important at all; 2 = Of little importance; 3 = Somewhat important; 4 = Very important; 5 = Extremely important.

Table 11. (Continued)

Item	1	2	3	4	5	No Response	Mean	Standard Deviation
5. Help parents learn how to talk to their children about good health practices and sexual behavior	1 .6%	4 2%	46 27%	64 38%	53 32%		3.976	.86
6. Work with parents to decide the amount of homework I assign to students	21 12%	60 36%	60 36%	24 14%	3 2%		2.571	.94
7. Contact parents when their children do something well or show improvement in class performance	0 0%	5 3%	23 14%	82 49%	58 34%		4.149	.76
8. Provide ideas to parents about what they can do to enhance their children's independence and self-confidence	1 .6%	8 5%	35 21%	88 52%	36 21%		3.893	.81

Table 11. (Continued)

Item	1	2	3	4	5	No Response	Mean	Standard Deviation
9. Ask parents to help their children practice difficult concepts and skills	3 2%	8 5%	41 24%	84 50%	32 19%		3.798	.86
10. Invite parents to assist me with learning activities in the classroom or lab	2 1%	19 11%	76 45%	53 32%	18 11%		3.393	.86
11. Have at least one conference each year with a parent of each of my students	5 3%	2 1%	31 18%	60 36%	70 42%		4.119	.95
12. Work on school policy committees with parents	2 1%	16 10%	53 32%	78 46%	19 11%		3.571	.85

Table 11. (Continued)

Item	1	2	3	4	5	No Response	Mean	Standard Deviation
13. Contact parents when their children have problems or experience failure	0 0%	2 1%	8 5%	83 49%	75 45%		4.375	.63
14. Invite parents to assist me with class field trips	7 4%	9 5%	51 31%	67 40%	34 20%		3.667	.99
15. Work with parents to set standards and procedures for student discipline	7 4%	22 13%	53 32%	67 40%	19 11%		3.411	.99
16. Provide specific activities that parents can do to help their children improve their grades	4 2%	18 1%	48 29%	79 47%	19 11%		3.542	.91
17. Help parents understand how their children earn grades in my classes	0 0%	5 3%	33 20%	83 49%	47 28%		4.024	.77

Table 11. (Continued)

Item	1	2	3	4	5	No Response	Mean	Standard Deviation
18. Work with parents to set goals for classroom learning	7 4%	26 15%	70 42%	52 31%	13 8%		3.226	.94
19. Inform parents about the skills their children should have to pass my class	1 .6%	9 5%	21 13%	96 57%	41 24%		3.994	.80
20. Involve parents as volunteers in my classroom	4 2%	24 14%	63 38%	58 35%	19 11%		3.381	.94
21. Collaborate with other teachers to develop parent-involvement activities and materials	6 4%	16 9%	56 33%	60 36%	29 17%	1 .6%	3.539	1.0
Total Mean							3.692	.52

the six types of parent involvement practices, Type 2, basic obligations of schools. In this type, teachers communicate with parents through memos, notices, phone calls, report cards and conferences. It is not surprising that teachers judge these things as very important or extremely important because they are given the most emphasis as key parent-involvement strategies in current teacher education programs (Jones, 1991). At the other extreme, the majority of the teachers (84%) judged working with parents to decide the amount of homework they assign to students as only of little or some importance.

In summary, these results suggest that although the teachers judged all the parent-involvement practices as somewhat important, practices which involve teacher communications with parents through different ways are most favored. On the other hand, teachers seem not to favor involvement practices that call for parents to be involved in the educational decision-making process.

Perceptions of Personal Teaching Efficacy

To assess personal teaching efficacy, each teacher was asked to respond to 12 efficacy statements in Part 3 of the questionnaire. Responses were recorded on a five-point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree (coded as 1) to strongly agree (coded as 5). The teachers' responses are assumed to reflect their own assessment of their ability and effectiveness as a teacher.

To determine whether the 12 efficacy items were representing personal teaching efficacy, a factor analysis was performed on the 12 items and confirmed this. Cronbach's alpha coefficient of internal consistency was also calculated for the items and an alpha of 0.63 was obtained. For reaching conclusions about groups, a reliability coefficient in the range of 0.30 to 0.50 is acceptable (Ary, Jacobs, & Raxavich, 1990, p. 281).

To reach conclusions about the teachers' personal sense of ability and effectiveness to successfully teach students, means for each item and a total mean were computed. As shown in Table 12, the teachers fluctuated on the 12 items from not knowing if they are effective to agreeing that they are effective and capable of making a difference for the students in their classrooms. The 12-item scale had an overall mean of 3.49 indicates that teachers have only a slightly positive perception of their ability and teaching effectiveness. When looking at individual items' responses, one sees that teachers were less positive about their ability to effectively deal with learning problems (Items 2, 6, and 11), but were very happy overall with their career choice (Item 12).

The somewhat weak sense of overall personal teaching efficacy displayed by these teachers could be due to several factors. Ashton (1985) identified two that may be most critical. He found that teachers who felt they were not adequately trained reported a lower sense of personal teaching

Table 12. Frequencies, percents, mean scores and standard deviations for the 12 items measuring teachers' perceptions of their personal teaching efficacy (N = 168)

Item	Strongly Disagree 1	Disagree 2	No Opinion 3	Agree 4	Strongly Agree 5	No Response	Mean	Standard Deviation
1. When a student does better than usual, many times it is because I expected a little extra effort	1 .6%	25 15%	32 19%	98 58%	12 7%		3.565	.85
2. I have enough training to deal with almost any learning problem	21 12%	97 58%	13 8%	32 19%	5 3%		2.423	1.0
3. My teacher training program and/or experience has given me the necessary skills to be an effective teacher	5 3%	21 12%	11 7%	109 65%	22 13%		3.726	.94
4. When a student has difficulty with an assignment, I am usually able to adjust the learning level	0 0%	19 11%	10 6%	125 75%	14 8%		3.798	.74

Table 12. (Continued)

Item	Strongly Disagree 1	Disagree 2	No Opinion 3	Agree 4	Strongly Agree 5	No Response	Mean	Standard Deviation
5. When a student gets a better grade, it is usually because I found better ways of teaching that student	0 0%	37 11%	38 6%	84 75%	9 8%		3.387	.88
6. If I really try hard, I can get through to even the most difficult student	2 1%	59 35%	18 11%	79 47%	10 6%		3.214	1.0
7. When the grades of my students improve, it is usually because I found more effective teaching approaches	0 0%	30 18%	29 17%	104 62%	5 3%		3.500	.81

Table 12. (Continued)

Item	Strongly Disagree 1	Disagree 2	No Opinion 3	Agree 4	Strongly Agree 5	No Response	Mean	Standard Deviation
8. If a student quickly masters a new concept I present, this is because I knew the necessary steps in teaching that concept	0 0%	26 15%	43 26%	92 55%	7 4%		3.476	.80
9. If a student does not remember information I gave in a previous lesson, I know how to increase their retention in the next lesson	0 0%	38 23%	34 20%	91 54%	5 3%		3.375	.86
10. If a student becomes disruptive and noisy, I know some techniques to redirect them quickly	0 0%	11 6%	8 5%	131 78%	18 11%		3.929	.64

Table 12. (Continued)

Item	Strongly Disagree 1	Disagree 2	No Opinion 3	Agree 4	Strongly Agree 5	No Response	Mean	Standard Deviation
11. If one of my students can't do a class assignment, I am able to accurately assess whether the assignment was at the correct level of difficulty	1 .6%	43 26%	27 16%	90 53%	7 4%		3.351	.92
12. I am happy with my career choice	1 .6%	7 4%	11 7%	96 57%	52 31%	1 .6%	4.144	.76
TOTAL MEAN							3.490	.40

efficacy than those who felt that they received adequate training as teachers. Teachers in this study (Item 2) were less than positive about whether their teacher training program had given them the necessary skills to deal with problems. In addition, Ashton found that teachers who believed they had principals and peers who treated them as partners and worked to develop a professional atmosphere within their buildings tended to have a higher sense of personal teaching efficacy. The weak sense of personal teaching efficacy just slightly below the 4.0 level that was displayed by teachers in this study may be due to the fact that they believe principals and teachers in their schools are not supportive of their work as teachers. Such a direct question was not included on the questionnaire, but is a common concern expressed frequently by family and consumer sciences teachers.

Support for Parent Involvement

Teachers, in Part 4 of the questionnaire, were asked about their own and others' level of support for parent involvement in the educational process. On a five-point scale ranging from none (coded as 1) to total (coded as 5), teachers rated their own level of support and estimated the level of support held by other teachers, the principal, superintendent, counselors, parents, the community, school board members, other administrators, and students. As Table 13 shows, the total mean was 3.450, indicating that teachers believe there is general support for parent involvement in the educational process of children.

Table 13. Frequencies, percents, mean scores and standard deviations for the 10 items measuring teachers' perceived level of support for parent involvement from various sources (N = 168)

Item	None 1	Very Little 2	Some 3	A Great Deal 4	Total 5	No Response	Mean	Standard Deviation
1. You personally	0 0%	6 4%	64 38%	81 48%	17 10%		3.649	.71
2. Other teachers	0 0%	12 7%	83 49%	70 42%	3 2%		3.381	.64
3. The principal	2 1%	7 4%	40 24%	102 61%	16 9%	1 .6%	3.737	.73
4. Superintendent	4 2%	15 9%	45 27%	87 52%	16 9%	1 .6%	3.575	.87
5. Counselors	2 1%	8 5%	49 29%	98 58%	11 7%		3.643	.72
6. Parents	1 .6%	22 13%	80 48%	52 31%	13 8%		3.321	.82
7. The community	1 .6%	25 15%	82 49%	58 34%	2 1%		3.208	.72

Table 13. (Continued)

Item	None 1	Very Little 2	Some 3	A Great Deal 4	Total 5	No Response	Mean	Standard Deviation
8. School board members	2 1%	17 10%	63 38%	74 44%	12 7%		3.458	.81
9. Other administrators	3 2%	20 12%	61 36%	75 44%	8 5%	1 .6%	3.389	.82
10. Students	8 5%	34 20%	65 39%	49 29%	12 7%		3.137	.97
TOTAL MEAN							3.450	.50

To determine whether the teachers' reported level of their own support for parent involvement was consistent with their level of parent-involvement practices, the total mean score obtained from the practices scale was correlated with the mean score of teachers' reported level of their support for parent involvement (Item 1). A correlation coefficient of .414, significant at the .01 level was obtained, suggesting that the higher the level of support that a teacher personally holds for parent involvement, the better are her parent-involvement practices.

In looking at responses by item, teachers rated themselves similar to their colleagues. This finding was somewhat surprising in that Epstein and Dauber (1991) found teachers likely to rate themselves significantly higher than they rated others in the level of support for parent involvement. A possible explanation as to why these teachers rated themselves similar to others is that their respective schools may, in 1994 and because of the national initiative toward more parent involvement, have new school-wide policies.

Relationships Among Selected Demographic Variables, Attitudes, Efficacy, Support, and Practices

Path analysis was used to study the relationships among selected demographic variables, attitudes, efficacy, support and practices of parent involvement. According to Bohrnstedt and Knoke (1982), path analysis is often used to study patterns of causation among variables in a hypothesized

causal system. Path analysis begins with a set of structural equations which are formulated to represent the structure of interrelated hypotheses in a model. Variables are entered into the equations in standardized form or Z scores. A conceptual model based on information gathered from the literature was hypothesized for this study as shown in Figure 2. A causal relationship was assumed among efficacy, attitude, support and practice. Demographic characteristics which were considered in the model included the education level of the teacher, courses other than family and consumer sciences taught, teaching experience, in-service training about parent involvement, and grade level(s) taught. The structural equations formulated for solution as hypothesized were: 1) $\text{efficacy} = f(\text{grade, education, experience, in-service, other courses})$; 2) $\text{attitude} = f(\text{grade, education, experience, in-service, other courses, efficacy})$;

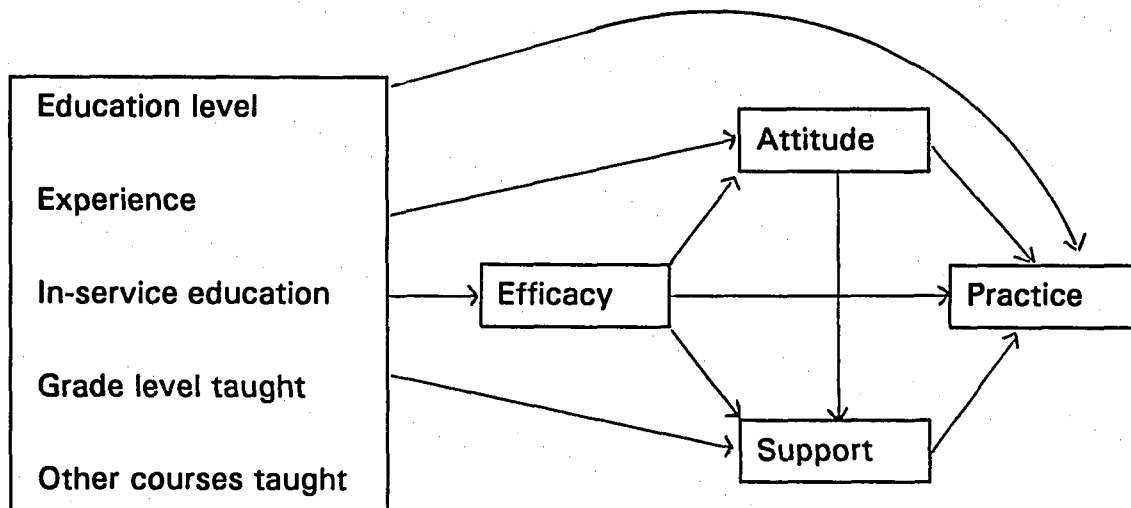


Figure 2. Path diagram of hypothesized model

3) support = $f(\text{grade, education, experience, in-service, other courses, efficacy, attitude})$; 4) practice = $f(\text{grade, education, experience, in-service, other courses, efficacy, attitude, support})$.

Parameter estimates were obtained using Lisrel (linear structural relationships). The structural equations were solved using the maximum-likelihood approach. The statistical procedures that were used to evaluate these equations were R-squares and the standardized regression coefficients or path coefficients. R-square indicates the proportion of variance in the dependent variable which is explained by the independent variables in the equation. The path coefficient is a standardized regression coefficient indicating the direct effect of one variable on another variable in the path analysis. The standardized regression coefficients among endogenous variables (the four on the right in Figure 2) are referred to as betas, a regression weight in which all of the variables in the equation are in the form of standardized scores. The standardized regression coefficients between each exogenous variable (those in the box on the left in Figure 2) and each endogenous variable are referred to as gammas.

The t-tests associated with the path coefficients were used to assess the statistical significance of the relationship in this study. A statistical significance of $P < .05$ was used to determine the rejection of the null hypothesis.

A chi-square test was done to assess the fit of the model to the data. Three hierarchically-related models, null, full, and reduced, were analyzed and their chi-square values with their respective degrees of freedom were compared to each other.

Lisrel was also used to estimate the indirect, direct, and total effects among the variables. Alwin and Hauser (1975) have observed that total effect is the change induced in a consequent variable by a given shift in an antecedent variable irrespective of the mechanism by which the change occurs. Indirect effects are those parts of a variable's total effect which are transmitted through specified intervening variables in the model. Direct effect is that part of a variable's total effect which remains when intervening variables are omitted; it is the effect which is not transmitted through intervening variables. Discomposition of effects into direct, indirect, and total effects is important because it helps to identify important suppressor variables which mediate between any two variables.

Using the null model for this study, all paths were set to zero, and a chi-square of 88.73 with 26 degrees of freedom was obtained ($P = .000$). In the full model, all possible paths were estimated; a chi-square of 0.00 with 0.00 degrees of freedom was obtained ($P = 1.00$). Table 14 shows the data for the completely-standardized solution for the full model. Among the demographic

Table 14. Completely-standardized solution (direct effects) for the full model showing the relationships among independent and dependent variables

Independent Variables	Dependent Variables			
	Efficacy (beta weights)	Attitude (beta weights)	Support (beta weights)	Practice (beta weights)
Grade	-0.034	0.089	-0.060	0.066
Education	0.105	0.131	0.105	-0.092
Experience	0.133	-0.040	0.053	0.174*
In-service	0.122	0.154	0.008	0.011
Other subject	0.088	-0.012	0.122	0.054
Efficacy	-	0.183*	0.120	0.115
Attitude	-	-	0.168*	0.312*
Support	-	-	-	0.176*
R-SQ	0.076	0.095	0.110	0.226
df	5/156	6/155	7/154	8/153

*Significant at .05 level.

variables, only experience was found to be a significant predictor of their preferred practices. Among the endogenous variables, efficacy predicts attitude, attitude predicts both support and practice and support predicts practice.

In the reduced model, all paths that were not significant were set to zero. A chi-square of 27.17 with 19 degrees of freedom was obtained ($P=0.101$). The reduced model is shown in Figure 3. The fit of the reduced model to the data was assessed. Any model is said to fit the data if the probability value is greater than 0.05; also, the greater the probability value the better the fit of the model to the data. Table 15 shows the changes in chi-square values and degrees of freedom among the three hierarchically-related models. The reduction in the chi-square values from the null model to the

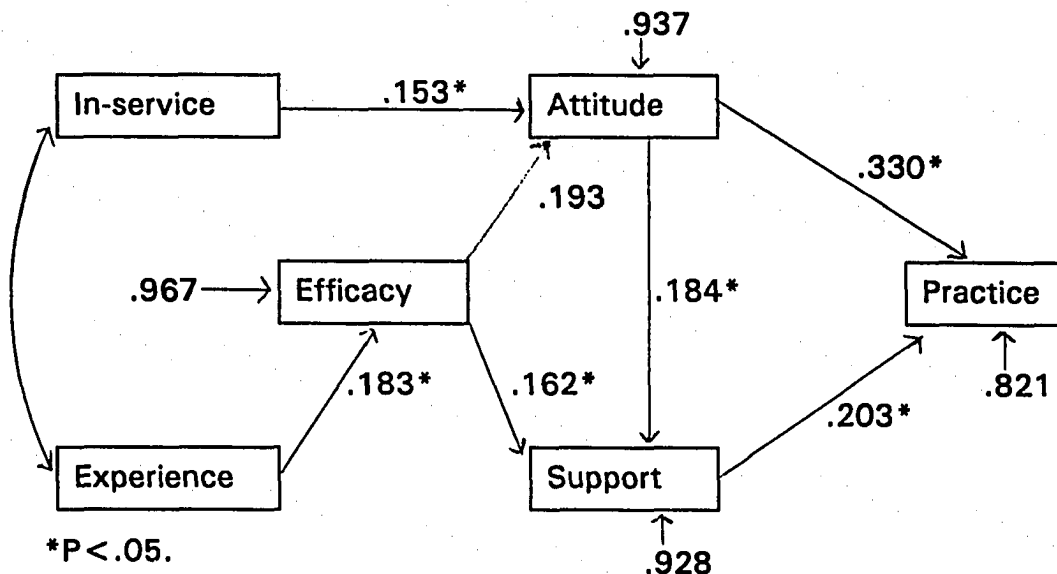


Figure 3. Reduced model with path coefficients

Table 15. Chi-square changes among the null, reduced, and full models

Model	Chi-square	Change in Chi-square	df	Change in df	P-value
Null	88.73	-	26	-	0.000
Reduced	27.17	61.56*	19	7	0.101
Full	0.00	27.17	0	19	1.000

*Significant at $P \leq 0.05$.

Table 16. Direct, indirect, and total effects for the full model

Independent variables	Dependent variables	Direct effect	Indirect effect	Total effect
Experience	Efficacy	0.183*		0.183*
Experience	Attitude	-	0.035	0.035
In-service		0.153*	-	0.153*
Efficacy		0.193*	-	0.193*
Experience	Support	-	0.036	0.036
In-service		-	0.028	0.028
Efficacy		0.162*	0.036	0.198*
Attitude		0.184*	-	0.184*
Experience	Practice	-	0.019	0.109
In-service		-	0.056	0.056
Efficacy		-	0.104*	0.104*
Attitude		0.330*	0.037	0.367*
Support		0.203*	-	0.203*

*Significant at $P \leq 0.05$.

reduced model was 61.56. The associated change in the degrees of freedom was 7. The critical chi-square value with 7 degrees of freedom was 14.07. Since the change in chi-square value exceeded this critical value, the change from the null model to the reduced model was statistically significant, indicating that the reduced model was a more efficient model than the null model. Further, the reduced model fit the data because the chi-square probability was greater than 0.05.

The computed chi-square change from the reduced model to the full model was 27.17. The change in degrees of freedom was 19. The critical chi-square value with 19 degrees of freedom was 30.14. Since the change in chi-square value does not exceed the critical value, it was concluded that although the full model fit the data ($P = 1.00$) it was not necessarily a better model than the reduced model. The reduced model was, therefore, retained.

Results from the reduced model (Figure 3) indicates that belief in the ability to successfully teach students (efficacy) leads to more positive attitudes about parent involvement and higher estimates of perceived level of support for parent involvement. On the other hand, positive attitudes also lead to higher estimates of perceived level of support for parent involvement by colleagues and better practices of parent involvement. Higher estimates of perceived level of support lead to better practices of parent involvement. Among the exogenous variables, in-service education in parent involvement leads to better

attitudes about parent involvement while experience in teaching leads to higher level of efficacy.

Results of the decomposition of effects (Table 16) showed that there were significant indirect effects from efficacy to practices with attitude and support as the mediating variables. It appears that both attitudes and support have a mediating influence between efficacy and practices. This implies that stronger belief in the ability to successfully teach students (efficacy) could lead to improved practices if teachers had more positive attitudes toward parent involvement and believed that colleagues had stronger levels of support for parent involvement. In other words, it appears that efficacy on its own does not improve practices. In-service training programs, in addition to improving efficacy, should also aim at improving teachers' attitudes about parent involvement and their perception of the level of support for parent involvement held by colleagues.

Differences in Attitudes, Practices, Efficacy, and Support by Selected Demographic Variables

T-tests were performed to determine whether or not teachers' attitudes, practices, efficacy, and perceived level of support held by colleagues differed by teachers' level of education, grade level(s) taught, and whether or not they taught other subject(s) in addition to family and consumer sciences. Table 17 shows the results of the three t-tests.

Table 17. Differences in teachers' attitudes, practices, efficacy and perceived level of support by level of education, grade levels taught and teaching of other subjects

	Attitudes	Practices	Efficacy	Support
Level of education	P = .006**	P = .125	P = .015**	P = .002**
Grade level taught	P = .350	P = .421	P = .523	P = .654
Taught other subjects	P = .504	P = .308	P = .267	P = .063

****P < .05.**

Significant differences were found between teachers' levels of education (whether they held only bachelors degrees or had some level of post-baccalaureate education) and their own attitudes and practices, and between level of education and their perception of the level of support held by colleagues for parent involvement. In comparison to teachers who had only bachelors degrees, teachers who had masters degrees expressed more positive attitudes toward parent involvement. They also saw themselves as more effective and capable teachers and perceived others as having higher levels of support for parent involvement than did teachers who had only bachelors degrees. However, positive attitudes among teachers with masters degrees did not indicate that they were likely to practice parent involvement more than did

those with bachelors degrees. These findings support those of Corwin and Wagenaar (1976) and Baker and Epstein (1992) who found that, although teachers with higher levels of education such as masters degrees had more positive attitudes toward parent involvement, they also had fewer contacts with parents. This suggests that higher levels of education increases teachers' autonomy and causes them to withdraw from parents.

Differences were also tested for grade levels taught by teachers and attitudes, practices, efficacy and support. No significant differences were found in attitudes, practices, efficacy and support between teachers who taught in the earlier grades (middle and junior high) and those who taught in high and senior high school. Previous studies that compared elementary and middle or junior high school teachers found that elementary teachers were likely to have more positive attitudes and to more frequently practice parent involvement than were the teachers of the older children (Dauber & Epstein, 1989). A possible reason for the lack of differences in attitudes and practices between junior and senior high school teachers in this study is that the differences in these two levels are not as marked as are those between elementary and middle or junior high school.

Teachers who reported teaching other subjects in addition to family and consumer sciences were tested to see if they were different in their attitudes, practices, and efficacy and their perceived level of support held by colleagues

as compared to those who taught no other subject. No significant differences were found in any of the variables.

Because path analysis revealed that in-service education about parent involvement improved attitudes toward parent involvement, an analysis of variance was performed to determine which of three types of in-service education, seminar or workshop (1-hour to half-day), major conference of one day or more, or college courses, seemed most effective. The results indicated that they were equally significant in their ability to improve teachers' attitudes toward parent involvement. These findings suggest that family and consumer sciences teacher education programs have several options for including parent-involvement education in their pre-service and in-service curricula.

Analysis of Teachers' Personal Views on Open-ended Questions about Parent Involvement

Teachers were encouraged to respond to three open-ended questions regarding parent involvement. First, they were asked to list the most successful practice(s) they had used or heard about others using to involve parents in their children's education. They were also asked to share their thoughts regarding the type(s) of preparation teachers need to help them strengthen school and home partnerships. Finally, they were asked to describe obstacles they saw to building stronger links between schools and parents.

Data from these questions were analyzed by assessing all responses to each question to identify common themes. These themes were used to group responses into different categories.

Table 18 presents teachers' responses regarding practices used to involve parents in their children's education. Although the data represent responses from 168 teachers, the total number of responses may not equal the total number of teachers because some teachers listed more than one practice and others did not respond to the question. Parent/teacher conferences was the most mentioned practice used to involve parents, followed by phone calls to parents and using parents as volunteers in the classroom. These findings

Table 18. Practices used by teachers to involve parents

Question: What is the most successful practice to involve parents in their children's education that you have used or heard about?	Number of Responses
1. Parent/teacher conferences	33
2. Phone calls to parents	27
3. Parents as volunteers in the classroom	26
4. Home-learning activities for parents to do with their children	16
5. Personal contacts and home visits	11
6. Memos and newsletters sent to the home	10
7. Parents' signatures on assignments	9
8. Social events for parents at school	7
9. Parent advisory councils	3

are not surprising because conferencing with parents receives the most emphasis in teacher preparation programs as a way to involve parents (Swap, 1987). On the other hand, few teachers listed a parent advisory council, perhaps suggesting that teachers are less likely to use practices that involves sharing power and decision-making with parents.

Table 19 presents teachers' responses regarding the types of preparation teachers believed they need to strengthen school-home partnerships. Seminars and workshops, and, specifically, communication skills training were most frequently listed, revealing that teachers seem to want specific training for parent involvement.

Table 19. Types of preparation needed by teachers to strengthen school-home partnerships

Question: To strengthen school-home partnerships, what type(s) of preparation do teachers need?	Number of Responses
1. In-service education, seminars, workshops	31
2. College courses	30
3. Communication skills training	20
4. "How to" methods	12
5. An understanding of today's family structures and the issues that affect how families function	8
6. Skills for teachers to collaborate with other teachers in other school districts	3

The last question asked teachers to describe any obstacles in their schools that prevent them from building stronger links between parents and schools (Table 20). A majority of the teachers indicated that the parents themselves, in one way or another, were the biggest obstacles. These findings are in agreement with those of Epstein and Dauber (1991), who found that teachers were most likely to blame parents for their own inability to maintain closer links between home and school. It is interesting that "working" parents are seen as the major problem, since the solution to have "nonworking" parents would create major social and economic problems. Perhaps there is a

Table 20. Obstacles teachers encounter in building stronger links between parents and schools

Question: What obstacle(s) do you see in building stronger links between parents and schools at your schools?	Number of Responses
1. Working parents	63
2. Teachers' lack of time	41
3. Uninterested parents	26
4. Dysfunctional families	16
5. Older teachers not willing to change their attitudes	9
6. Lack of trust between parents and teachers	9
7. Lack of support from principals and colleagues	5
8. Racial diversity and language barrier	4
9. Large population of students	2
10. Not enough phones available in school buildings	2

subtle implication that the real obstacle is "working mother," again a scapegoat attitude that is discriminatory and not in line with the realities of today's required and desired lifestyles.

CHAPTER V. SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

Studies have shown that when parents are involved in their children's education, the children perform better in school, complete homework assignments on time, attend school regularly and have higher educational aspirations. Despite the positive link between parent involvement and children's academic achievement, many educators still resist the idea of involving parents in the educational process of their children in meaningful ways. This has led researchers to propose possible factors that could explain the resistance from some educators. These factors include teachers' attitudes toward parent involvement, teachers' beliefs about their own teaching effectiveness (efficacy), and the level of support teachers believe others in their schools and communities hold for parent involvement.

The purpose of this study was to assess junior high and high school family and consumer sciences teachers concerning their involvement of parents in the educational process. Specific objectives were to:

1. assess attitudes toward parent involvement.
2. describe parent involvement practices
3. assess the sense of personal teaching efficacy
4. assess the level of support they believe others in their schools and communities hold for parent involvement

5. determine relationships among selected demographic variables, attitudes, sense of personal teaching efficacy, beliefs about the level of support and practices
6. determine whether or not their attitudes, practices, sense of teaching efficacy and perceived level of support held by others differ by educational levels, grade levels taught, and teaching of other subjects in addition to family and consumer sciences
7. based on the results related to the previous six objectives, make recommendations for improvements in family and consumer sciences teacher education programs.

A random sample of 227 (33%) of the 682 family and consumer sciences teachers in Iowa in the 1993-1994 school year was selected from a computerized database provided by the Iowa Department of Education.

Based on a review of literature and of instruments used in similar studies, two instruments were seen to be appropriate for adaption and use in this study. One was titled, "High School and Family Partnerships: Surveys and Summaries," developed by elementary, junior, and high school teachers in Baltimore in collaboration with researchers at Johns Hopkins University's Center on Families, Communities, Schools and Children's Learning (Epstein, Connors, & Salinas, 1993), and designed to study strengths and weaknesses of schools in relation to school family partnerships. The other was developed

by Gibson and Dembo (1984) and improved by Woolfolk and Hoy (1990) to measure teacher efficacy.

Items adapted from the two instruments and developed by this researcher were used to draft an instrument titled, "School-Home Partnerships Survey." It consisted of six sections: 1) attitudes toward parent involvement, 2) practices of parent involvement, 3) sense of personal teaching efficacy, 4) teachers' beliefs about the level of support for parent involvement from others in their schools, 5) experience and background information from teachers, and 6) general thoughts about parent involvement.

The draft instrument was evaluated by teachers in terms of its contents, clarity, readability, and validation that items were written from family and consumer sciences teachers' perspectives. After revisions were made, the draft instrument was then sent to 25 randomly-selected family and consumer sciences teachers who met the same criteria as the final sample but were not included in the final sample. Each was asked to complete the questionnaire and suggest how it could be improved. Based on this pilot test, the final version of the questionnaire was prepared and printed in booklet form. Copies were mailed to the study sample on March 1, 1994. Several steps were followed to encourage teachers to return their questionnaires: printing the questionnaire in booklet form, using original letterhead and signatures for the

cover letter, personalizing the letters, typing teachers' names and addresses on the envelopes, and sending two follow-up mailings to nonrespondents.

The complete questionnaires were coded and analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS), Release 4. Data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics including path analysis, t-tests, analysis of variance, and Pearson product-moment correlation. Sections related to attitudes and efficacy were subjected to factor analysis and Cronbach's alpha coefficients were calculated for the items on the attitudes, practices and efficacy scales. Results are summarized in the following sections.

Experience and Background of the Sample

Thirty-two percent of the teachers had had some form of in-service education on parent involvement. All teachers held a bachelors degree, and 26% reported having a masters degree. A majority of the teachers (64%) taught high school (grades 9-12). Seventy-nine percent had full-time teaching appointments, 39 percent taught another subject area in addition to family and consumer sciences and for the majority (74%) it was health, all teachers reported Caucasian as their racial background, and all but one was female. The majority (78%) were between the ages of 40 and 69. Eighty-six percent of the full-time teachers earned between \$20,000 and \$39,999 with the majority (29%) earning \$30,000 to \$34,999 during the 1993-1994 school year. Among the part-time teachers, 80 percent reported earning between

\$10,000 and \$24,999 with the majority (34%) earning \$15,000 to \$19,999. Part-time teachers who reported earning less than \$10,000 were most likely to have fewer years of teaching experience and a lower percent teaching appointment.

Attitudes Toward Parent Involvement

Overall, teachers in this sample did not have strong positive attitudes about parent involvement. However, they did agree that parent involvement can increase teacher effectiveness, that every family has strengths that can be tapped to increase their children's success in school, and that parent involvement is important for a school to be good, for students to be successful in school, and for teachers to be able to do more. They agreed that teachers should receive training in parent involvement at the undergraduate level. Teachers appeared less willing to support the belief that it is the teacher's responsibility to involve parents in their children's education.

Practices of Parent Involvement

Overall, the teachers in the sample judged all the parent-involvement practices as somewhat or more than somewhat important. However, practices involving communicating with parents were judged to be very important while those that called for parents to be involved in the decision-making process were seen to be of little importance.

Perceptions of Personal Teaching Efficacy

Overall, the teachers in this sample displayed a somewhat weak sense of personal teaching efficacy, and it seemed to be due to perceived lack of support from their principals and other teachers in the school and perceived inadequate teacher training education. However, they did indicate that they were happy with their career choice as family and consumer sciences teachers.

Support for Parent Involvement

Teachers rated themselves, other teachers in their schools, the principal, superintendent, counselors, parents, the community, school board members, other administrators and students as having some support for parent involvement in their schools. It was surprising that the teachers did not rate themselves higher than others in the level of support for parent involvement, since Epstein and Dauber (1991) found that individuals tend to rate themselves higher than other people on a given attribute.

Relationships Among Demographics, Attitudes, Efficacy, Support, and Practices

Results from path analysis showed that teachers' positive perception of their ability to successfully teach students (efficacy) led to positive attitudes toward parent involvement and higher estimates of perceived level of support for parent involvement by colleagues. Positive attitudes also led to higher estimates of perceived level of support for parent involvement by colleagues

and better practices of parent involvement. Higher estimates of perceived level of support led to better practices of parent involvement. Among the exogenous variables, in-service education about parent involvement led to better attitudes about parent involvement, while higher number of years of teaching experience led to higher level of efficacy. In-service education programs should, therefore, aim at improving attitudes and perceived level of support for parent involvement from colleagues in order to improve practices.

Differences in Attitudes, Practices, Efficacy, and Support by Selected Variables

T-test analysis revealed significant differences between teachers with bachelors degrees and those with masters degrees. Compared to teachers with bachelors degrees, those with masters degrees expressed significantly more positive attitudes about parent involvement, rated themselves as significantly more effective and capable teachers and rated others higher in relation to the level of support for parent involvement. But more positive attitudes among teachers with masters degrees did not translate into better parent-involvement practices. No significant differences were found in attitudes, practices, efficacy, and perceived level of support for parent involvement between teachers who taught junior high school and those who taught high school. There was no significant difference in any of the variables between teachers who taught other subjects in addition to family and consumer scienc-

es and those who taught no additional subject(s). One-way analysis of variance revealed that the three types of in-service education (seminar or workshop, major conference, college courses) were equally significant in their ability to improve teachers' attitudes toward parent involvement.

With regard to the open-ended question that asked teachers to indicate the most successful practice(s) they had used to involve parents, the majority indicated parent/teacher conferences and phone calls as the most successful methods. Regarding the type of preparation teachers need to help them strengthen the partnerships between school and home, the majority indicated in-service education, seminars, workshops and college courses, and communication skills training as the types of preparation teachers need to help them implement better parent-involvement practices. Regarding obstacles that prevented them from building stronger links between schools and parents, an overwhelming number of teachers indicated working parents as the biggest obstacle.

Conclusions

Based on the findings of this study, the following conclusions are proposed.

1. Family and consumer sciences teachers proclaimed support for parent involvement in children's education but most teachers did not project positive attitudes toward parent involvement.

2. The negative attitudes that some teachers have toward parent involvement may be caused primarily by a lack of adequate training for parent involvement at the undergraduate level and in most cases, this lack of training at the college level is not compensated for with in-service education programs.
3. A significant number of teachers who participated in this study considered only traditional parent-involvement practices as important to use in their teaching. Parent-involvement practices that call for teachers to share power and decision-making with parents are not supported by many teachers.
4. The somewhat weak sense of personal teaching efficacy displayed by the teachers in this study may be caused by perceived lack of support for their work by colleagues, and perceived lack of adequate teacher education programs.
5. Teachers in this study felt that they, and others in their schools held some support for parent involvement, and their level of support for parent involvement reflects accurately their level of reported practices of parent involvement.
6. Practices of parent involvement can significantly be improved if teachers receive adequate training in parent involvement, improve their attitudes about parent involvement, believe that they are effective and capable

teachers and believe that other people in their schools have a higher level of support for parent involvement.

7. In addition to traditional methods (e.g., conferences, phone calls, and memos) of involving parents, family and consumer sciences teachers need to learn nontraditional and creative methods (e.g., community cable TV and local radio shows) of involving parents in the educational process if they are to maintain stronger links between schools and parents of varied backgrounds.
8. A significant number of teachers saw working parents and teachers' lack of time as the two most important reasons they could not maintain stronger links between themselves and the parents of their students.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this research, the following recommendations are made:

1. Parent involvement must be presented to pre-service teachers so that it is viewed as an integral part of their preparation, rather than an "add on." This will help teachers learn how to develop a partnership with parents to create environments that promote children's academic achievements. It will also prepare teachers and equip them with the skills needed to meet one of the "Goals 2000: Education America Act" bill signed by President

Clinton on March 31, 1994. The goal states that, "every school will promote involvement of parents in their children's education."

2. Pre-service teachers should be provided practical opportunities or experiences to help them develop and sharpen their skills in working with parents.
3. Parent involvement should be taught at both the pre-service and in-service level in a developmental sequence that progresses from learning about more traditional types of parent involvement activities to the nontraditional types where parents and teachers work together essentially as partners in education.
4. Principals and other administrators should be included in parent involvement training as they often set the rules and norms in the schools. If they are not aware of the benefits of parent involvement, or are not skilled in working with parents, they may set norms for teachers that discourage them from working to involve more parents.
5. This study was quantitative in approach and did not allow the subjects to be probed in order to clarify and find out information in detail. A qualitative study to provide in-depth insights as to why teachers responded the way they did toward parent involvement would be invaluable to the knowledge base and add substance to the development of theory in this area.

6. Studies that focus on different settings, for example, inner city vs. rural areas should be conducted to determine whether teachers differ in the way they feel about and practice parent involvement as part of their teaching process.
 7. A comparable study that focuses on parents and students should be conducted to verify whether they see things the way teachers do regarding parent involvement.
 8. In this study, the proxy method was used to assess teachers' practices of parent involvement. In order to further verify the teachers' practices of parent involvement, studies that ask them to report their actual parent involvement practices are needed.
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APPENDIX A. DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENT

SCHOOL-HOME PARTNERSHIPS SURVEY

Department of Family and Consumer Sciences Education and Studies
Iowa State University

PART 1: PARENT INVOLVEMENT IN CHILDREN'S EDUCATION

PLEASE CIRCLE THE ONE CHOICE FOR EACH STATEMENT THAT BEST REPRESENTS YOUR OPINION, USING THE FIVE RESPONSE CATEGORIES BELOW:

- 1 = Strongly Disagree
 2 = Disagree
 3 = No Opinion
 4 = Agree
 5 = Strongly Agree

	<u>SD</u>	<u>D</u>	<u>NO</u>	<u>A</u>	<u>SA</u>
1. Parents will assist their children with schoolwork at home if they know what to do.	1	2	3	4	5
2. Parent involvement can increase teacher effectiveness.	1	2	3	4	5
3. Parents of middle and high school students want to be involved in their children's education.	1	2	3	4	5
4. Every family has strengths that can be tapped to increase their children's success in school.	1	2	3	4	5
5. Parent involvement is important for a school to be good.	1	2	3	4	5
6. Involving parents in their children's education is the teacher's responsibility.	1	2	3	4	5
7. Parents do more good than harm when helping students with schoolwork at home.	1	2	3	4	5
8. Teachers need in-service education to implement effective parent-involvement practices.	1	2	3	4	5
9. Parent involvement is important for student success in middle and high school.	1	2	3	4	5
10. Teachers can influence parents to support their children at home with school-related tasks.	1	2	3	4	5
11. Middle and high school teachers are too overburdened to work with parents in meaningful ways.	1	2	3	4	5
12. Professional training of teachers at the undergraduate level should include information on working with parents.	1	2	3	4	5
13. Teachers should receive recognition for time spent on parent-involvement activities	1	2	3	4	5
14. If parents would do more for their children, I could do more.	1	2	3	4	5

	<u>SD</u>	<u>D</u>	<u>NO</u>	<u>A</u>	<u>SA</u>
15. Too much parent involvement can hinder a school from doing its best job.	1	2	3	4	5
16. Parents don't want to learn how to be involved in their children's education	1	2	3	4	5

PART 2: HOW TO BEST INVOLVE PARENTS

PLEASE CIRCLE THE ONE CHOICE FOR EACH STATEMENT THAT BEST REPRESENTS HOW IMPORTANT IT IS TO YOU TO INCORPORATE THIS PRACTICE INTO YOUR TEACHING, USING THE FIVE RESPONSE CATEGORIES BELOW:

- 1 = Not Important At All
- 2 = Of Little Importance
- 3 = Somewhat Important
- 4 = Very Important
- 5 = Extremely Important

	<u>NIAA</u>	<u>OLM</u>	<u>SI</u>	<u>VI</u>	<u>EI</u>
1. Provide ways to help parents keep track of their children's homework.	1	2	3	4	5
2. Help parents develop better parenting skills.	1	2	3	4	5
3. Invite parents to visit and observe my classroom.	1	2	3	4	5
4. Assign homework that requires my students to talk and share ideas with someone at home.	1	2	3	4	5
5. Help parents learn how to talk to their children about good health practices and sexual behavior.	1	2	3	4	5
6. Work with parents to decide the amount of home-work I assign to students.	1	2	3	4	5
7. Contact parents when their children do something well or show improvement in class performance.	1	2	3	4	5
8. Provide ideas to parents about what they can do to enhance their children's independence and self-confidence	1	2	3	4	5
9. Ask parents to help their children practice difficult concepts and skills.	1	2	3	4	5
10. Invite parents to assist me with learning activities in the classroom or lab.	1	2	3	4	5
11. Have at least one conference each year with a parent of each of my students.	1	2	3	4	5

	<u>NIAA</u>	<u>OLM</u>	<u>SI</u>	<u>VI</u>	<u>EI</u>
12. Work on school policy committees with parents.	1	2	3	4	5
13. Contact parents when their children have problems or experience failure.	1	2	3	4	5
14. Invite parents to assist me with class field trips.	1	2	3	4	5
15. Work with parents to set standards and procedures for student discipline.	1	2	3	4	5
16. Provide specific activities that parents can do to help their children improve their grades.	1	2	3	4	5
17. Help parents understand how their children earn grades in my classes.	1	2	3	4	5
18. Work with parents to set goals for classroom learning	1	2	3	4	5
19. Inform parents about the skills their children should have to pass my class.	1	2	3	4	5
20. Involve parents as volunteers in my classrooms.	1	2	3	4	5
21. Collaborate with other teachers to develop parent-involvement activities and materials.	1	2	3	4	5

PART 3: IMPACTING STUDENT LEARNING

PLEASE CIRCLE THE ONE CHOICE FOR EACH STATEMENT THAT BEST REPRESENTS YOUR FEELINGS, USING THE FIVE RESPONSE CATEGORIES BELOW:

- 1 = Strongly Disagree
 2 = Disagree
 3 = No Opinion
 4 = Agree
 5 = Strongly Agree

	<u>SD</u>	<u>D</u>	<u>NO</u>	<u>A</u>	<u>SA</u>
1. When a student does better than usual, many times it is because I exerted a little extra effort.	1	2	3	4	5
2. I have enough training to deal with almost any learning problem.	1	2	3	4	5
3. My teacher training program and/or experience has given me the necessary skills to be an effective teacher.	1	2	3	4	5

	<u>SD</u>	<u>D</u>	<u>NO</u>	<u>A</u>	<u>SA</u>
4. When a student has difficulty with an assignment, I am usually able to adjust the learning level.	1	2	3	4	5
5. When a student gets a better grade, it is usually because I found better ways of teaching that student.	1	2	3	4	5
6. If I really try hard, I can get through to even the most difficult student.	1	2	3	4	5
7. When the grades of my students improve, it is usually because I found more effective teaching approaches.	1	2	3	4	5
8. If a student quickly masters a new concept I present, this is because I knew the necessary steps in teaching that concept.	1	2	3	4	5
9. If a student does not remember information I gave in a previous lesson, I know how to increase their retention in the next lesson.	1	2	3	4	5
10. If a student becomes disruptive and noisy, I know some techniques to redirect them quickly.	1	2	3	4	5
11. If one of my students can't do a class assignment, I am able to accurately asses whether the assignment was at the correct level of difficulty.	1	2	3	4	5
12. I am happy with my career choice.	1	2	3	4	5

PART 4: SUPPORT FOR PARENT INVOLVEMENT

PLEASE CIRCLE ONE CHOICE THAT BEST REPRESENTS WHAT YOU BELIEVE IS THE LEVEL OF SUPPORT EACH GROUP HOLDS FOR PARENT INVOLVEMENT:

1 = None
 2 = Very Little
 3 = Some
 4 = A Great Deal
 5 = Total

	<u>N</u>	<u>VL</u>	<u>S</u>	<u>AGD</u>	<u>T</u>
1. You personally	1	2	3	4	5
2. Other teachers	1	2	3	4	5
3. The principal	1	2	3	4	5
4. Superintendent	1	2	3	4	5
5. Counselors	1	2	3	4	5

	<u>N</u>	<u>VL</u>	<u>S</u>	<u>AGD</u>	<u>T</u>
6. Parents	1	2	3	4	5
7. The community	1	2	3	4	5
8. School board members	1	2	3	4	5
9. Other administrators	1	2	3	4	5
10 Students	1	2	3	4	5

PART 5: YOUR EXPERIENCE AND BACKGROUND

ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS BY CIRCLING OR FILLING IN THE BLANK.

- HAVE YOU HAD ANY IN-SERVICE EDUCATION ON PARENT INVOLVEMENT SINCE YOU STARTED TEACHING?
1 = Yes
2 = No
- IF YOU ANSWERED YES TO THE ABOVE QUESTION, WHAT WAS THE NATURE OF THE IN-SERVICE EDUCATION?
1 = Seminar or workshop (1 hour to half day)
2 = Major conference (1 day or more)
3 = College course(s)
4 = Other, — Specify _____
- HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN TEACHING? _____ YEARS.
- WHAT IS YOUR HIGHEST LEVEL OF EDUCATION?
1 = Bachelor's
2 = Bachelor's + credits
3 = Master's
4 = Master's + credits
5 = Other, specify _____
- HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOURSELF?
1 = African American
2 = Asian American
3 = Caucasian
4 = Hispanic American
5 = Other, specify _____
- WHAT GRADE LEVEL(S) DO YOU TEACH? CHECK ALL THAT APPLY.
_____ Middle school (grades 6-8)
_____ Junior high school (grades 7-9)
_____ High school (grades 9-12)
_____ Senior high school (grades 10-12)

7. DO YOU TEACH FULL-TIME?
 _____ Yes _____ No, I have _____ percent appointment.
8. WHAT SUBJECT AREA(S) IN ADDITION TO HOME ECONOMICS DO YOU TEACH? CHECK ALL THAT APPLY.
- | | |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| _____ No others (skip to #8) | _____ Social studies |
| _____ Science | _____ English/Language arts |
| _____ Math | _____ Foreign language |
| _____ Music | _____ Health |
| _____ Business | _____ Physical education |
| _____ Other (specify) _____ | |
9. GENDER: _____ male _____ female
10. BIRTH YEAR: 19 _____
11. ANNUAL SALARY FOR 1992-93 SCHOOL YEAR:
- | | | |
|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| _____ Less than \$10,000 | _____ \$25,000 to \$29,999 | _____ \$40,000 to \$44,999 |
| _____ \$10,000 to \$14,999 | _____ \$30,000 to \$34,999 | _____ \$45,000 to \$49,999 |
| _____ \$15,000 to \$19,999 | _____ \$35,000 to \$39,999 | _____ \$50,000 and over |
| _____ \$20,000 to \$24,999 | | |

PART 6: YOUR THOUGHTS

PLEASE USE THE SPACE PROVIDED BELOW TO WRITE YOUR OWN THOUGHTS.

1. WHAT IS THE MOST SUCCESSFUL PRACTICE TO INVOLVE PARENTS IN THEIR CHILDREN'S EDUCATION THAT YOU HAVE USED OR HEARD ABOUT?
2. TO STRENGTHEN SCHOOL-HOME PARTNERSHIPS, WHAT TYPE(S) OF PREPARATION DO TEACHERS NEED?

3. WHAT OBSTACLE(S) DO YOU SEE IN BUILDING STRONGER LINKS BETWEEN FAMILIES AND SCHOOLS AT YOUR SCHOOL?
4. SHARE WITH US GENERAL THOUGHTS ABOUT YOUR JOB AND THE PROFESSION OF FAMILY AND CONSUMER SCIENCE EDUCATION NOW AND IN THE FUTURE.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION!

APPENDIX B. HUMAN SUBJECTS APPROVAL FORM

Checklist for Attachments and Time Schedule

The following are attached (please check):

12. ☒ Letter or written statement to subjects indicating clearly:
- a) purpose of the research
 - b) the use of any identifier codes (names, #'s), how they will be used, and when they will be removed (see Item 17)
 - c) an estimate of time needed for participation in the research and the place
 - d) if applicable, location of the research activity
 - e) how you will ensure confidentiality
 - f) in a longitudinal study, note when and how you will contact subjects later
 - g) participation is voluntary; nonparticipation will not affect evaluations of the subject
13. ☐ Consent form (if applicable)
14. ☐ Letter of approval for research from cooperating organizations or institutions (if applicable)
15. ☒ Data-gathering instruments

16. Anticipated dates for contact with subjects:

First Contact

Last Contact

January 10, 1994

Month / Day / Year

March 31, 1994

Month / Day / Year

17. If applicable: anticipated date that identifiers will be removed from completed survey instruments and/or audio or visual tapes will be erased:

April 30, 1994 or before

Month / Day / Year

18. Signature of Departmental Executive Officer

Date

Department or Administrative Unit

Judy K. Brun12/15/93FCS Education & Studies

19. Decision of the University Human Subjects Review Committee:

☒ Project Approved ☐ Project Not Approved ☐ No Action RequiredPatricia M. Keith

Name of Committee Chairperson

1/16/94

Date

PM Keith

Signature of Committee Chairperson

APPENDIX C. COVER LETTER

College of Family and Consumer Sciences
Department of Family and Consumer
Sciences Education and Studies
219 MacKay Hall
Ames, Iowa 50011-1120
515 294-6444
FAX 515 294-4493

March 1, 1994

«teacher's name»
«school»
«address»
«city», «state» «zip»

Dear Ms. «lname»:

There is renewed interest in school-home partnerships as they impact educational effectiveness. Advantages and disadvantages continue to be discussed in the literature.

This is of special interest to us because of our field's emphasis on family life, parenting education, and the work-family interface. If strengthening School-home partnerships has potential for improving the educational process, we believe that family and consumer sciences educators, with our natural home-school focus, are in an excellent position to play a leadership role in this area.

Practical insights that you as a classroom teacher can provide will help us decide whether to include appropriate development of parent-involvement skills in the preparation of new family and consumer sciences teachers. Therefore, we ask that you please contribute to this work by completing the enclosed questionnaire.

Confidentiality of your responses will be maintained. The survey code is only to identify returns and will be removed as soon as your returned survey is recorded. Results will be reported as group data; no one will be identified individually.

IT IS VERY IMPORTANT TO HAVE YOUR RESPONSE. PLEASE SET ASIDE 20 MINUTES TO COMPLETE THE SURVEY AND RETURN IT TO US BY MARCH 18, 1994. Simply tape it shut and place it in a mailbox. No stamp is required.

If you have questions, please telephone us or fax us a note, using the numbers at top. Thank you for providing your expertise as we continue to help support top-quality education to family and consumer sciences students in Iowa's schools.

Sincerely,

Judy K. Brun, Ph.D., C.H.E.
Professor and Chair

Tersie Ndon, M.S.
Research Assistant

APPENDIX D. FOLLOW-UP POST CARD

March 22, 1994

Three weeks ago a questionnaire seeking your opinion about school-home partnerships was mailed to you. If you have already completed and returned it, please accept our sincere thanks. If not, could you please do so today.

Because the questionnaire has been sent to only a small, but representative sample, it is extremely important that your response be included. If by some chance you did not receive the questionnaire, or it got misplaced, please call us immediately, collect (515-294-6444) and we will get another one in the mail to you today.

Sincerely,

Judy K. Brun
Department Chair

Tersie Ndon
Research Assistant

APPENDIX E. FOLLOW-UP LETTER

College of Family and Consumer Sciences
Department of Family and Consumer
Sciences Education and Studies
219 MacKay Hall
Ames, Iowa 50011-1120
515 294-6444
FAX 515 294-4493

April 12, 1994

«teacher's name»
«school»
«address»
«city», «state» «zip»

Dear Ms. «lname»:

Four weeks ago a questionnaire seeking your opinions about school and home partnerships was mailed to you. As of today we have not yet received your completed questionnaire.

The large number of questionnaires returned is very encouraging. But whether we will be able to determine accurately the opinions of home economics teachers about school and home partnerships depends upon you and others who have not yet responded. This is because our past experiences suggest that those of you who have not yet sent in your questionnaire may hold quite different opinions from those who have.

Because of our field's emphasis on work-family interface, home and school partnerships are of special interest to us as family and consumer sciences educators. Therefore, practical insights that you as a classroom teacher can provide will help us determine whether and how to include appropriate development of parent-involvement skills in the preparation of new family and consumer sciences teachers.

It is for these reasons that we are sending a replacement, in the event that your questionnaire has been misplaced or did not reach you. Directions are provided in the questionnaire. The survey code is only to identify returns and will be removed as soon as your returned survey is recorded. Results will be reported as group data; no one will be identified individually.

We urge you to complete and return the questionnaire as quickly as possible. No stamp is required. Simply tape it shut and place it in a mailbox. Your contribution to the success of this study will be greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Judy K. Brun, Ph.D., C.H.E.
Professor and Chair

Tersie Ndon, M.S.
Research Assistant

APPENDIX F. CORRESPONDENCE

April 13, 1993

Dr. Joyce Epstein
Sociology Department
Johns Hopkins University
3400 N. Charles Street
Baltimore, MD 21218 - 20608

Dear Dr. Epstein,

We are conducting research in the area of home-school interfaces. We are especially interested in how high school teachers involve parents and what attitudes these teachers have about this involvement. We have read several of your articles which appeared in the Elementary School Journal (e.g., Teachers' reported practices of parent involvement: Problems and possibilities, 1982; Parent involvement: A survey of teacher practices, 1982). We are particularly interested in the article you wrote jointly with Susan Dauber, which appeared in the Elementary School Journal, Vol 1: 3, 1991, titled "School programs and teacher practices of parent involvement in Inner-city elementary and middle schools." We would very much appreciate it if you would send us a copy of the questionnaire that was used in this study.

Thank you very much. We look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,

Judy Brun, Ph.D., C.H.E.
Professor and Chair

Tersie U. Ndon
Research Assistant



Date: September 29, 1993

To: Tersie Ndon

From: Joyce L. Epstein, Lori J. Connors, Karen Clark Salinas

Re: Permission to use:

- ☒ **School and Family Partnerships: Surveys and Summaries. (Revised, 1993)**
 - Questionnaires for Teachers and Parents in Elementary and Middle Grades
 - How to Summarize Your School's Survey DataJoyce L. Epstein and Karen Clark Salinas.
- ☒ **High School and Family Partnerships: Surveys and Summaries. (1993)**
 - Questionnaires for Teachers, Parents, and Students
 - How to Summarize Your High School's Survey DataJoyce L. Epstein, Lori J. Connors, and Karen Clark Salinas.

This is to grant permission for you to use or adapt the survey(s) noted above in your study.

We ask only that you include appropriate references to the surveys and authors in the text and bibliography of your reports and publications.

Best of luck with your work.

IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY

OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

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College of Family and Consumer Sciences

Department of Family and Consumer

Sciences Education and Studies

219 MacKay Hall

Ames, Iowa 50011-1120

515 294-6444

FAX 515 294-4493

December 2, 1993

Anita E. Woolfolk, Ph.D.
Department of Educational Psychology
10 Seminary Place
Rutgers -- The State University
New Brunswick, New Jersey 08903

Dear Dr. Woolfolk:


We are conducting research in the area of home-school interactions. We are especially interested in how high school teachers involve parents in their children's education, what attitudes these teachers have about this involvement and whether or not teacher's sense of efficacy influences their parent-involvement practices.

We would like permission to use your *Teachers' Sense of Personal Efficacy Instrument* items as part of our data collection device. The items from your instrument were found in the article you published jointly with Wayne K. Hoy in the Journal of Educational Psychology, vol. 82:1, 1990, titled "Prospective teachers' sense of efficacy and beliefs about control."

We would appreciate your response so we can begin piloting our instrument in January 1994. For your convenience, we have enclosed a form for you to sign if you are able to give permission. We will, of course, acknowledge your contribution in all publications that may result from this research.

If you have any questions, please telephone me at 515-294-6444 or by fax at 515-294-4493. I look forward to hearing from you soon. Thank you for your support.

Sincerely,



JUDY K. BRUN, Ph.D., C.H.E.
PROFESSOR AND CHAIR

Re: Tensie's
Research

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PERMISSION AUTHORIZATION

I, Dr. Anita Woolfolk,
author of the article titled "Prospective Teachers' Sense of Efficacy
and Beliefs About Control" published in the Journal of
Educational Psychology, vol. 82:1, 1990
hereby authorize Dr. Judy Brun, Professor & Chair, Department of Family
and Consumer Sciences Education and Studies at Iowa State University
to use the Teacher Efficacy Instrument
which appeared in the above mentioned article to collect data for
the home-school interfaces study.

Anita E. Woolfolk

Signature

12/8/93

Date

